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THE  
ADVENTURES  
OF  
G I L    B L A S  
or  
SANTILLANE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

*A NEW EDITION*

WITH ENGRAVINGS FROM PAINTINGS

By ROBERT SMIRKE, ESQ R. A

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. IV

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HISTORY  
OF  
GIL BLAS  
OF SANTILLANE

BOOK THE TENTH

CHAPTER THE FIRST

*Gil Bias sets out for the Asturias, and passes through Valladolid where he goes to see his old master, doctor Sangrado By accident, he comes across signoi Manuel Ordonnez, governor of the hospital*

JUST as I was arranging matters to take my departure from Madrid, and go with Scipio to the Asturias, Paul the Fifth gave the duke of Lerma a cardinal's hat This pope, wishing to establish the inquisition in the kingdom of Naples, invested the minister with the purple, and by that means hoped to bring king Philip over to so pious and praiseworthy a design Those who were best acquainted with this new member of the sacred college, thought much like myself, that the church was in a fair way for apostolical purity, after so ghostly an acquisition.

Scipio, who would have liked better to see me once more blazing at court, than either cloistered or rusticated, advised me to shew my face at the cardinal's audience. Perhaps, said he, his eminence, finding you at large by the king's order, may think it unnecessary to affect any further displeasure against you, and may even reinstate you in his service. My good friend Scipio, answered I, you seem to forget that my liberty was granted only on condition of making myself scarce in the two Castries. Besides, can you suppose me so soon inclined to become an absentee from my domain of Lurias? I have told you before, and I tell it you once again. Though the duke of Lerma should restore me to his good graces, though he should even oblige me don Rodrigo de Calderona's place, I would refuse it. My resolution is taken. I mean to go and find out my parents at Oviedo, and carry them with me to Valencia. As for you, my good fellow, if you repent of having linked your fate with mine, you have only to say so. I am ready to give you half of my ready money, and you may stay at Madrid, where fortune puts on her kindest smiles to those who woo her lustily.

What then? replied my secretary, a little affected by these words, can you suspect me of any unwillingness to follow you into your retreat? The very idea is an injury to my zeal and my attachment. What! Scipio, that faithful appendage, who would willingly

have passed the remnant of his days with you in the tower of Segovia, rather than abandon you to your wretched fate, can he feel sorrowful at the prospect of an abode, where a thousand rural delights are waiting to smile on his arrival' No, no, I have not a wish to turn you aside from your resolution. Nor can I refrain from owning my malicious drift; when I advised you to shew your face at the duke of Lerma's audience, it was for the purpose of ascertaining whether any seedlings of ambition were scattered among the fallows of your philosophy. Since that point is settled, and you are mortified to all the pomps and vanities of the world, let us make the best of our way from court, to go and suck in with Zephyrus and Flora the innocent, delicious pleasures so luxuriant in the nursery of our imaginations.

In fact, we soon afterwards took our departure together, in a chaise drawn by two good mules, driven by a postillion whom I had added to my establishment. We stopped the first day at Alcala de Henares, and the second at Segovia, whence, without stopping to see our generous warden, Tordesillas, we went forward to Penafiel on the Duero, and the next day to Valladolid. At sight of this last town, I could not help fetching a deep sigh. My companion, surprised at that conscientious ventdation, enquired the reason of it. My good fellow, said I, it is because I practised medicine here for a

long time It gives me the horrors even now, to think of my unexpiated murders The whole list of killed and wounded are mustered in battle array yonder • the tomb and the hospital yawn with their disgorged inhabitants, who are lushing on to tear me piece-meal, and exact the vengeance due to the drenched crew. What a dreadful fancy said my secretary In truth, signor de Santillane, your nature is too tender. Why should you be shocked at the common course of exchange in your branch of trade? Look at ail the oldest physicians their withers are unwrung What can exceed the self-complacency with which they view the exits of patients, and the entrances of diseases? Natural, constitution bears the brunt of all their failures, and medical infallibility takes the credit of lucky accidents.

It is very true, repeth I, that doctor Sangrado, on whose practice I formed myself, was like the rest of the old physicians in point of self-complacency It was to little puipose that twenty people in a day yielded to his prowess: he was so persuaded that bleeding in the arm and copious libations of warm water were specifics for every case, that instead of doubting whether the death of his patients might not possibly invalidate the efficacy of his prescriptions, he ascribed the result to a vacillating compliance with his system. By all the powers! cried Scipio with a burst of laughter, you open to me an.

incomparable character. If you have any curiosity to be better acquainted with him, said I, it may be gratified to-morrow, should Sangrado be still living, and resident at Valladolid. but it is highly improbable ; for he had one foot in the grave when I left him several years ago.

Our first care, on putting up at the inn, was to enquire after this doctor. We were told that he was not dead; but being incapacitated by age from paying visits or any other vigorous exertions, he had been superseded by three or four other doctors who had risen in to repute by a new practice, accomplishing the same end by different means. We determined on lying by for a day at Valladolid, as well to rest our mules, as to call on signor Sangrado. About ten o'clock next morning we knocked at his door; and found him sitting in his elbow chair, with a book in his hand. He rose on our entrance; advanced to meet us with a firm step for a man of seventy, and begged to know our business. My worthy and approved good master, said I, have you lost all recollection of an old pupil. There was formerly one Gil Bias, as you may remember, a boarder in your house, and for some time your deputy. What! is it you, Santallane ' answered he with a cordial embrace. I should not have known you again. It, however, gives me great pleasure to see you once more. What have you been doing since we parted ' Doubtless you have made medi-

cine your profession. It was very strongly my inclination so to do, replied I, but imperious circumstances made me reluctantly abandon so illustrious a calling.

So much the worse, rejoined Sangrado. with the principles you sucked in under my tuition, you would have become a physician of the first skill and eminence; with the guiding influence of heaven to defend you from the dangerous allurements of chemistry Ah' my son, pursued he with a mournful air, what a change in practice withm these few years' The whole honoui and dignity of the ait is compromised That mystery, by whose inscrutable decrees the lives of men have in all ages been determined, is now laid open to the rude, untutored gaze of blockheads, novices, and mountebanks. Facts are stubborn things ; and ere long the very stones will cry aloud against the rascality of these new practitioners *lapides clamabunt* ' Why, sir, there are fellows in this town, calling themselves physicians, who drag their degraded persons at the *currus triumphahs antimonn*, or as it should properly, be translated, the cart's tail of antimony Apostates from the faith of Paracelsus, idolaters of filthy *kermes*, healers at hap-hazard, who make all the science of medicine to consist in the preparation and prescription of drugs What a change have I to announce to you! There is not one stone left upon another III die whole structure which our great

predecessors had raised. Bleeding in the feet. for example, so raiely practised m better times, is now among the fashionable follies of the day That gentle, civilized system of evacuation which prevailed under my auspices is subverted by the reign of anarchy and emetics, of quackery and poison In short, chaos is come again ' Every one orders what seems good m his own eyes, there is no-deference to the authonty of ancient wisdom, our masters are laid upon the shelf, and their axioms not one tittle the more regarded, for being delivered in languages, as defunct as the subjects of their application

However desirable it might seem to laugh at so whimsical a declamation, I had the good manners to resist the impulse, and not only that, but to inveigh bitterly against *kermes*, without knowing whether it was a vegetable or an animal, and to pour forth a commination of curses against the authors and inventors of so diabolical an engine. Scipio, observing my bye-play in this scene, had a mind to come in for his share m the banter Most venerable prop of the true practice, said he to Sanguado, as I am descended in the third generation from a physician of the old school, give me leave to join you in your philippic agamat chemical conspiracies My late illustrious progenitor, heaven forgive him all his sins! was so warm a partisan of Hippocrates,, that he often came to blows with ignorant pretenders, who vomited forth blasphemies against that

high priest of the faculty. What is bred in the bone will not come out of the flesh. I could willingly inflict tortures and death with my own hands, on those rash innovators, whose daring enormities you have characterized, with such accuracy of discrimination and such force of language. When wretches like these gain an ascendancy in civilized society, can we wonder at the disjointed condition of the world

The times are even more out of joint than you are aware of, said the doctor. My book against the vanities and delusions of the new practice might as well have fallen still-born from the press; it seems, if any thing, to have acted by contraries, and to have exasperated heresy. The apothecaries, like the Titans of old, heaping potion upon pill, and invading the Olympus of medicine, think themselves fully qualified to usurp and maintain the throne, now that it is only thought necessary to set open the doors, and to drive the enemy out at the portal or the postern by main force. They go to the length of infusing their deadly drugs into apozems and cordials, and then set themselves up against the most eminent of the fraternity. This contagion has spread its influence even among the cloisters. There are monks in our convents, who unite surgery and pharmacy to the labours of the confessional. Those medical baboons are always dipping their paws into chemistry, and inventing compositions strong

enough to lay a scene of ecclesiastical mortality in the temperate abodes of peace and religion. Now there are in Valladolid above sixty religious houses for both sexes judge what ravage must have been made there by unmerciful pumping and the lancet misapplied Signor Sangrado, said I, you are perfectly in the right to give the poisoners no quarter I utter groan for groan with you, and heave the philanthropic sigh over the invaded lives of our fellow-creatures, sinking under the fell attack of so heterodox a practice. It fills me with horror to think what a dead weight chemistry may one day be to medicine, just as adulterated corn operates on national credit Far be that evil day from this generation

Just at this climax of our discourse, in came an old female servant, with a salver for the doctor, on which was a little light roll, and a glass with two decanters, the one filled with water, and the other with wine. After he had eaten a slice, he washed it down with a diluted beverage, two parts water to one of wine; but this temperate use of the good creature did not at all save him from the acrimony of my ridicule. So so, good master doctor, said I, you are fairly caught in the fact You a wine-bibber • you, who have entered the lists like a knight-errant against that unauthenticated fermentation you, who reached your grand climacteric on the strength of the pure element? How long have you been

so at odds with yourself? Your time of life can be no excuse for the alteration; since, in one passage of your writings, you define old age to be a natural consumption which withers and attenuates the System and as an inference from that position, you reprobate the ignorance of those waters, who dignify wine with the appellation of old men's milk What can you say therefore in your own defence?

You belabour me most unjustly, answered the old physician. If I drank neat wine, you would have a right to treat me as a deserter from my own standard, but your eyes may convince you that my wine is well mixed. Another heresy, my dear apostle of the wells and fountains! replied I recollect how you rated the canon Sedillo for drinking wine, though plentifully dashed with the salubrious fluid. Own modestly and candidly that your theory was unfounded and fanciful, and that wine is not a poisonous liquor, as you have so falsely and scandalously libelled it in your works, any further than, like any other of nature's bounties, it may be abused to excess\*

This lecture sat rather uneasily on our doctor's feelings, as a candidate for consistency. He could not deny his inveteracy against the use of wine in all his publications: but pride and vanity not allowing him to acknowledge the justice of my attack on his apostacy; he was left without a word to say for himself. Not wishing to push my sarcasm beyond

the bounds of good humour, I changed the subject; and after a few minutes longer stay took my leave, gravely exhorting him to maintain his ground against the new practitioners. Courage,, signor Sangrado! said I never be weary of setting your wits against *kermes*, and deafen the health-dispensing tribe with your thunders against the use of bleeding in the feet If, spite of all your zeal and affection for medical orthodoxy, this empiric generation should succeed in supplanting true and legitimate practice, it will be at least your consolation to have exhausted your best endeavours in the support of truth and reason

As my secretary and myself were walking to the inn, making our observations in high glee on the doctor's entertaining and original character, a man from fifty-five to sixty years of age happened to pass near us in the street, walking with his eyes fixed on the ground, and a large rosary in his hand I coned over the distinctive cut of his appearance most cunningly, and was rewarded in the recognition of signor Manuel Ordonez, that faithful trustee for the affairs of the hospital, of whom so honourable mention is made in the first volume of these true and instructive memoirs. Accosting him with the most profound and unquestionable tokens of respect, I paid my compliments in due form and order to the venerable and trust-worthy signor Manuel Ordonez, the man of all the world in

whose hands the interests of the poor and needy are most safely and beneficially placed At these words he looked me steadfastly in the face, and answered that my features were not altogether strange to him, but that he could not recollect where he had seen me. I used to go backwards and forwards to your house, replied I, when one of my friends, by name Fabncio Nunez, was in your service Ah! I -recollect the circumstance at once, rejoined the worthy director with a cunning leer, and have good reason to do so; for you were a brace of pleasant lads, and were by no means backward in the little scape-grace tricks of youth and inexperience Well and what is become of poor Fabncio? Whenever he comes across my thoughts, I cannot help feeling a little uneasy about his temporal and eternal welfare.

It was to relieve your mind upon that subject, said I to signor Manuel, that I have taken the liberty of stopping you in the street. Fabncio is settled at Madrid, where he employs himself in publishing miscellanies and collections What do you mean by miscellanies and collections? replied he. I mean, resumed I, that he writes in verse and prose, from epic poems and the highest branches of philosophy/down to plays, novels, epigrams, and riddles. In short, he is a lad of universal genius, and most exemplary benevolence, sometimes modestly taking to himself the credit of his own compositions, and

Sometimes lending out his talents to the literary ambition of those noblemen, who write for their own amusement, but wish their names to be concealed, except from a chosen circle. By traffic like this, he sits at the very first tables. But how does he sit at his own? said the director: *tijkm* what terms does he live with his baker? Not quite so confidentially as with people of fashion, answered I, for between ourselves, I take him to be quite as much out at elbows as ever Job was. More bonds and judgments against him than ever Job had, take my word for it! replied Ordonnez. Let him lick the spittle of his titled friends and patrons, till his stomach heaves at the nauseating saliva, his printed dedications and his oral flattery, in spite of all the cringing and all the toad-eating, which constitute the stock in trade of his profession, with all the profits of his works, whether by subscription or ordinary publication, will not bring grist enough to his mill, to keep hunger from the door. Mind if what I say does not turn out to be true! He will come to the dogs at last.

Nothing more likely! replied I, for he cohabits with the muses already; and many a plain man has *found* to his cost, that there is no keeping company with the sisters, without being worried by their *bvl-lyujy* brethren. My friend Fabncio would have done MUch better by remaining quietly with your lordship; he would now have been lying on a bed

of roses, and every thing he had touched would have turned to gold. He would at least have been in a very snug birth, said Manuel. He was a great favourite of mine, and I meant, by a regular gradation from subaltern to principal situations, to have established him in ease and affluence on the basis of public charity, but the foolish fellow took it into his head to set up for a wit. He wrote a play, and brought it out at the theatre in this town; the piece went off tolerably well, and nothing thenceforth would serve his turn but commencing author by profession. Lope de Vega, in his estimation, was but a type of him; preferring, therefore, the intoxicating vapour of public applause to the plain roast and boiled of this substantial ordinary, he came to me for his discharge. It was to no purpose for me to argue the point, or to prove to him what a silly cur he was, to drop the bone and run after the shadow. The mad blockhead was so suffocated by the smother of authorship, that the instantaneous dread of fire could not rouse his alacrity to escape burning. In short, he was miserably unconscious of his own interest, as his successors can testify for him, possessing practical good sense, though without half Fabwicio's quickness and versatility, makes it his whole study and delight to go through his business in a workmanlike manner, and to fall in with all my little ways. In return for such good conduct, I have pushed him forward in a

manner corresponding with his deserts; and he unites in his own person, even at this time of day, two offices in the hospital, the least lucrative of which would be more than sufficient to place any honest man at his ease, though encumbered with a yearly teeming wife

## CHAPTER II

*Gil Blas continues his journey, and arrives in safety at Oviedo The condition of his family His father's death, and its consequences.*

FROM Valiadohd, we got to Oviedo in four days, without any untoward accident on the road, in spite of the proverb, which says, that robbers lay their ears to the ground, when pilgrims are going with rich offerings, and traders are riding with fat purses. It would have been a feasible, as well as a tempting speculation. Two tenants of a subterraneous abode might have presented an aspect, to have frightened our doubloons into a surrender; for courage was not one of the qualities I had imbibed at court; and Bertrand, my mule-driver, seemed not to be of a temper to get his brains blown out in defending a

purse into which he had no free ingress. Scipio was the only one of the party, who was any thing of a bully.

It was night when we came into town. Our lodgings were at an inn near my uncle, Gil Perez, the canon. I was very desirous of ascertaining the circumstances of my parents, befoie my first interview with them, and, in order to gam that information, it was impossible to make my enquiries in a better channel than through my landloid and landlady, into the lines of Whose faces you could not look, without being satisfied that they knew every tittle of their neighbours' concerns. As it turned out, the landlord kenned me after a diligent perusal of my features, and cued out 'By saint Antony of Padua ' this is the son of the honest usher, Bias of Santiliane. Ay indeed ' said the hostess; and so it is without a single muscle alteied! just for all the world that same little stripling Gil Bias, of whom we used to say that he was as saucy as he was high. It brings old times to my memory ' when he used to come hither with his bottle under his arm, to fetch wine for his uncle's supper.

Madam, said I, you have a most inveterate memory; but for goodness sake change the subject; and tell me the modern news of my family. My father and mother are doubtless in *no* very enviable situation. In good truth, you may say that, answered the landlady: you may rack your beams as

Long as you like, but you will never think of any thing half so miserable as what they are suffering at this present moment Gil Perez, good soul' is defunct all down one side by a stroke of the palsy, and the other half of him is little better than a corpse; we cannot expect him to last long then your father, who went to live with his reverence a little while ago, is troubled with an inflammation of the lungs, and is standing, as a body may say, quavery-mavery between life and death; while your mother, who is not over and above hale and hearty herself, is obliged to nurse them both

On this intelligence, which made me feel some compunctious yearnings of nature, I left Bertrand with my stud and baggage at the inn \* then, with my secretary at my heels, who would not desert me in my time of need, I repaired to my uncle's house The moment I came within my mother's reach, a natural emotion of maternal instinct unfolded to her who I was, before her eyes could possibly in over the traces of my countenance Son, said with a melancholy expression, after having embraced me, come and be present at your father's death your visit is just in time to take in all the piteous circumstances of so deplorable an event. With this heart-rending reception, she led me by the hand into a chamber where the wretched Bias of Santillane, stretched on a comfortless bed, in cold and Asmal accord with the thinness of his fortunes, was

just entering on the last great act of human nature. Tlbtigh surrounded by the shades of death, he was not quite unconscious of what was passing about him. My dearest friend, said my mother, here Is *your son* Gil Bias, who mtreats your forgiveness for all his undutiful behaviour, and is come to ask your blessing before you die At these tidings, my father opened, his eyes which were on the point of closing for ever\* he fixed them upon me, and reading in my countenance, notwithstanding the awful brink on which he stood, that I was a sincere mourner for his loss, his feelings were recalled to sympathy by my sorrow. He even made an attempt to speak, but his strength was too much exhausted I took one of his hands in mine, and, while I bathed it with my tears, m speechless agony of soul, he breathed his last, as if he had only waited my arrival, to pay the debt of nature and wing his way to scenes of untried being.

This event had been too long present to my mother's mind, to overwhelm her with any unpaial-leled affliction Perhaps it sat more heavily on me than on her, though my father had never in his life given me any reason to feel for him as a father But besides that mele filial instinct would have made me weep over his cold remains, I reproached myself with not having contributed to the comfort of his latter days, then, when I consideied what a hard-heal ted villain I had been, I seemed to myself like





a monster of ingratitude, or rather like an impious parricide My uncle, whom I afterwards saw lying at his length on another wretched couch, and in a most lamentable pickle, made me experience fresh agonies of upbraiding conscience Unnatural son ' said I, communing with my own uneasy thoughts, behold the chastisement of heaven upon thy sins, in the disconsolate condition of thy nearest relations Hadst thou but thrown to them the superflux of that abundance, in which before thy imprisonment thou rolledst, thou mightest have procured for them those little comforts, which thy uncle's ecclesiastical pittance was too scanty to furnish, and perhaps have lengthened out the term of thy father's life

Gil Perez had fallen into a state of second childhood, and was, though numerically upon the list of the living, in every individual organ a mere corpse His memory, nay, his very senses had retired from their allotted stations- in his system Bootless was it for me to strain him in my pious arms, and lavish outward tokens of affection on him they might as well have been wasted on the desert air To as little purpose did my mother ring in his unnerved ear, that I was his nephew Gil Blas, he gazed at me with a vacant, stupid stare, and gave neither sign nor answer, Had the ties of consanguinity and gratitude been all too weak, to awaken my tender sympathy for an uncle, to whom I owed the means of my first launch into the world, the impression

of helpless dotage on my senses must have softened me into something like the counterfeit of virtuous emotion

While this scene was passing, Scipio preserved a melancholy silence, sharing in all my sorrows, and mingling his sighs with mine in the chastised luxury of friendship. But concluding that my mother, after so long an absence, might wish to have some such conversation with me, as the presence of a stranger must rather repress than promote, I drew him aside, saying: Go, my good fellow, sit down quietly at the inn, and leave me here with my only surviving parent, who might consider your company as an intrusion, while talking over family affairs. Scipio withdrew for fear of being a clog upon our confidence, and I sat down with my mother to an interchange of communication, which lasted all night. We reciprocally gave a faithful account of all that had happened to each of us, since my first sally from Oviedo. She related in full measure and running over, all the petty insults, disappointments, and mortifications, which she had undergone in her pilgrimage from house to house as a duenna. A great number of these little anecdotes it would have hurt my pride that my secretary should have noted down in his biographical budget, though I had never concealed from him the ups and downs in the lottery of my own life. With all the respect I owe to my mother's sainted memory, the good lady had

not the knack of going the shortest road to the end of a story had she but pruned her own memons of all luxuriant circumstances, there would not have been materials for more than a tithe of her narrative

At length she got to the end of her tether, and I began my career With respect to my general adventures, I passed them over lightly; but when I came to speak of the visit which the son of Bertrand Muscada, the grocer of Oviedo, had paid me at Madrid, I enlarged with decent compunction on that dark article in the history of my life I must frankly own, said I to my mothei, that I gave that young fellow a very bad reception, and he, doubtless, in revenge, must have drawn a hideous outline of my moral features He did you more than justice, I tiust, answered she for he told us that he found you so puffed and swollen with the good fortune thrust upon you by the prime minister, as scarcely to acknowledge him among your former acquaintance, and, when he gave you a moving description of our miseries, you listened as if you had no interest in the tale, or knowledge of the parties But as fathers and mothers can always find some cue for palliation m the conduct of their graceless children, we were loth to believe that you had so bad a heart Your arrival at Oviedo justifies our favourable interpretation, and those tears which are now flowing down you cheeks, are so many pledges.either of your innocence or your reformation

Your constructions were too partial, replied ' there was a great deal of truth in young Muscada's report. When he came to see me, all my faculties were engrossed by vanity and mammon, ambition, the prevailing devil which possessed me, left not a thought to throw away on the desolate condition of my parents. It therefore could be no wonder, if in such a disposition of mind I gave rather a freezing reception to a man who, accosting me in a peremptory style, took upon him to say, without mincing the matter, that it was well known, I was as rich as a Jew, and therefore he advised me to send you a good round sum, seeing that you were very much put to your shifts. nay, he went so far as to reprove me, in phrase of more sincerity than good manners, With my unfeeling negligence of my family. His confounded personality stuck in my throat, so that losing my little stock of patience, I shoved him fairly by the shoulders out of my closet. It must be confessed that I took the administration of justice a little too much into my own hands, being judge and party in the same cause \* neither was it proper that you should bear the brunt, because the grocer was a little anti-saccharine in his phraseology; nor was his advice the less pertinent or just, though couched, in homely terms, or urged with plodding vulgarity.

All this came plump in the teeth of my conscience, the moment I had turned Muscada out of

doors, The voice of natural instinct contrived ta make its way; my duty to my parents brought the blood into my face; but it was the blush of shame for its neglect, and not the glow of triumph, at its performance Yet even my remorse can give me, little credit in your eyes, since it was soon stifled in the fumes of avarice and ambition. But some time afterwards, having- been safely lodged in the towel of Segovia by royal mandate, I fell dangerously ill there, and that timely remembrancer was the cause of bringing back your son to you So true is it, that sickness and imprisonment were my best moral tutors, for they enabled nature to resume her rights, and weaned me effectually from the court. Henceforth all my deai delight is in solitude; and my only business in the Astunas is to intreat that you would share with me in the mild pleasures of a retired life If you reject not my earnest petition, I will attend you to an estate of mine in the kingdom of Valencia, and we will live there together very comfortably You aie of course aware that I intended to take my father thither also, but since heaven has ordained it otherwise, let me at least have the satisfaction.of affording an asylum to my mother, and making amends by all the attentions in my power for the fallow seasons in the former harvest of my filial duty

I accept your kind intentions in very good part, said, my mother; and would, take the journey with-

out hesitation, if I saw no obstacles in the way. But to desert your uncle in his present condition would be unpardonable; and I am too much accustomed to this part of the country, to like living elsewhere \* nevertheless, as the proposal deserves to be maturely weighed, I will consider further of it at my leisure At present, your father's funeral requires to be ordered and arranged As for that, said I, we will leave it to the care of the young man whom you saw with me; he is my secretary, with as clever a head and as good a heart as you have often been acquainted with; let the business rest with him, it cannot be in better hands.

Hardly had I pronounced these words, when Scipio came back; for it was already broad day. He enquired whether he could be of any service in Our present distresses I answered that he was come just in time to receive some very important directions. As soon as he was made acquainted with the business in hand A word to the wise<sup>1</sup> said he \* the whole procession with its appropriate heraldry is already marshalled in this head of mine you may trust me for a very pretty funeral. Have a care, said my mother, to make it plain and decent, without any thing like pomp to parade It can Scarcely be too humble for my husband, whom all the town knows to have been low in rank, and indigent in circumstances. Madam, replied Scipio, though he had been the meanest and most destitute

of the human race, I would not bate one button in the array of his posthumous honours. My masters credit is at stake in the proper conduct of the ceremony' he has been in an ostensible situation under the duke of Lerma, and his father ought to be buried with all the forms of state and nobility.

I thought exactly as my secretary did upon the subject; and even went so far as to bid him spare no expense on the occasion. A little leaven of vanity still fermented in the mass of my philosophy, and rose in my bosom with all the effervescence of its original lightness. I flattered myself that by lavishing posthumous honours on a father, who had blessed the day of his decease by no lucrative bequest, I should instil into the conceptions of the bystanders a high sense of my generous nature. My mother, on her part, whatever airs of humility she might put on, had no dislike to seeing her husband carried out with due observance of funeral pomp and ceremony. We therefore left Scipio to do just as he pleased; and he, without a-moment's delay, adopted all the necessary measures for the display of the undertaker's liveliest fancy.

The genius of that artist was called forth but too successfully. His emblems, devices, and draperies were so ostentatious, as to disgust instead of cajoling the native\*: every individual, whether of the town or the suburbs, whether high or low, rich or poor, felt shocked and insulted by this after thought pa-

rade. This ministenal beggar on horseback, said one, can put his hand into his pocket for his father's funeral baked meats, but never found in his heart wherewithal to furnish his living table with common necessities. It would have been much mone to the purpose, said another, to have made the old gentleman's latter days comfortable, than to have wasted such thriftless sums on a post obit act of filial munificence. In short, quips of the brain and peltings of the tongue patted round our execrated heads. It would have been well, had the storm been only a whirlwind of passion, or hurricane of words; but we were all, Scipio, Bertrand, and myself, corporally admonished of our misdeeds, on our coming out of church, they abused us like pickpockets, made mouths and odious noises as we passed, and followed Bertrand at his heels to the inn with a copious volley of stones and mud. To disperse the mob which had collected before my uncle's house, my mother was obliged to shew herself at the window, and to declare publicly that she was thoroughly satisfied with my proceedings. Another detachment had filed off to the stable-yard where my carnage stood, in the full determination of breaking it to pieces; and this, they would inevitably have done, if the landlord and landlady had not found some means of quieting their perturbed spirits and turning them aside from their outrageous purpose.

All these affronts so revolting to my dignity, the

effect of the tales which the young grocer had been spreading about town, inspired me with such a thorough hatred for my native place, that I determined on quitting Oviedo almost immediately, though but for this bustle I might have made it my residence for some time. I announced my intention, with the reasons of it, to my mother, who, considering my uncouth reception as no very flattering compliment to herself, did not urge my longer stay among people so little inclined to treat me civilly. The only point remaining now to be discussed, was her future destiny and provision. My dear mother, said I, since my uncle stands so much in need of your attendance, I will no longer urge you to go along with me, but, as his days seem likely to be very few on earth, you must promise to come and take up your abode with me at my farm, as soon as the last duties are performed to his honoured remains.

I shall make no such promise, answered my mother, for I mean to pass the remnant of my days in the Asturias, and in a state of perfect independence. Will you not on all occasions, replied I, be absolute mistress in my household? May be so, and. may be not! rejoined she • you have only to fall in love with some flirt of a girl, and then you will marry: then she will be my daughter-in-law, and I shall be her stepmother; and then we shall live together as stepmothers daughters-in-law usually

do. You prognostics, said I, are fetched from a great distance, I have not at present the most remote intention of entering into the happy state but even though such a wham should take possession of my brain, I will pledge myself for instructing my wife betimes in an implicit submission to your will and pleasure That is giving security, without the means of making good your contract, replied my mothei, you would scarcely be able to justify bail I would not even swear that in our spanng-matches, you might not take your wife's part in preference to mine, however ill she might behave, or however unreasonably she might argue

You talk very excellent sense, madam, cried my secretary, coming in foi his share of the conversation . I think, just as you do, that docility is about as much the virtue of a donkey as of a daughter-in-law As the mattei stands, that there may be no difference of opinion between my master and you, since you are absolutely determined to live asunder, you m the Astunas, and he in the kingdom of Valencia, he must allow you an annuity of a hundred pistoles, and send me hitheir every year for the payment By thus arranging matters, mother and son will be very good friends, with an interval of two hundred leagues between them The parties concerned fell in at once with the proposal I paid the first year in advance, and stole out of Oviedo the next morning before dawn, for fear of ruing with saint Stephen in

popular favour Such were the charms of my return to my native place An admnable lesson this, for those successful upstarts, who having gone abroad to make their fortunes, come home to be the purse proud tyrants of their birth-place

### CHAPTER III

*Gil Bias sets out for Valencia, and arrives at lurnas description of his seat, the particulars of his reception, and the characters of the inhabitants he found there*

WE took the road for Leon, afterwards that of Palencia, and, continuing our journey by short stages, arrived on the evening of the tenth day at the town of Segoiba, whence early on the morrow we repaired to my seat, at the distance of very little more than three leagues In proportion as we approached nearer, it was amusing to see with what a longing eye my secretary looked at all the estates which lay in our way, to the right and left of the road. Whenever he caught a glimpse of any, which bespoke the rank and opulence of its owner, he never missed pointing at it with his finger, and wishing that were the place of our retreat\*

I know not, my good friend, said I, what idea you have formed of our habitation, but if you have taken it into your head that ours is a magnificent house, with the domain of a great landed proprietor, I warn you in time that you are laying much too flattering an unction to your vanity

If you have no mind to be the dupe of a warm imagination, figure to yourself the little ornamented cottage which Horace fitted up near Tibur in the country of the Sabines, on a small farm, the fee-simple of which was given him by Maecenas Don Alphonso has made me just such another present, more as a token of his affection, than for the value of the thing Then I must expect to see nothing but a dirty hovel<sup>1</sup> exclaimed Scipio Bear in mind, replied I, that I have always given you quite an unvarnished description of my place, and now, even at this moment, you may judge for yourself whether I have not stuck to truth and nature in my representations Just carry your eye along the course of the Guadalaviar, and observe at a little distance from the further bank, near that hamlet, consisting of nine or ten tenements, a house with four small turrets, that is my mansion

The deuce and all I stammered out my secretary, short-breathed with sudden admiration why that house is one of the prettiest things in nature Besides the castellated air which those turrets, give it, all the beauties of situation and architecture, fertility

of soil, and perfection of landscape combine to rival  
01 excel the immediate neighbourhood of Seville,  
complimented as it is for its picturesque attractions  
by the appellation of an earthly paradise Had we  
chosen the place of our settlement for ourselves, it  
could not have been more to my taste a river  
meanders through the grounds, distilling plenty and  
verdure from its fertilizing bosom, the leafy honours  
of an umbrageous wood invite the mid-day walk,  
and qualify the temperature of the seasons What  
a heavenly abode of solitude and contemplation<sup>1</sup>  
Ah ' my dear master, we shall act very foolishly, if  
we are in a hurry to run away from our happiness  
I am delighted, answered I, that you are so well  
satisfied with the retreat provided for us, though yet  
acquainted with only a small part of its attractions

As we were chatting in this strain, we got nearer  
and nearer to the house, where the door opened as  
by magic, the moment Scipio announced signor Gil  
Bias de Santillane, who was coming to take possession  
of his estate At the mention of this name,  
received with reverential homage by the people who  
had been instructed in the transfer of their obedience,  
my carriage was admitted into a large court  
where I alighted then leaning with all my weight  
upon Scipio, as if walking was a derogation from  
my dignity, and putting on, the great man after the  
most consequential models, I reached the hall,  
where, on my entrance, seven or eight servants

made their obeisances. They told me, they were come to welcome their new master with their best loves and duties that don Caesar and don Alphonso de Leyva had chosen them to form my establishment, one in quality of cook, another as under-cook, a third as scullion, a fourth as porter, and the rest as footmen, with an express injunction to receive no wages or perquisites, as those two noblemen meant to defray all the expenses of my household. The cook, master Joachim by name, was commander in chief of this battalion, and announced to me the whole array of the campaign, he declared that he had laid in a large stock of the choicest wines in Spam, and insinuated that for the solid supply of the table, he flattered himself a person of his education and experience, who had been six years at the head of my lord archbishop of Valencia's kitchen, must know how to dish up a dinner, so as to meet the ideas of the most fastidious layman in Christendom. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating, added he so I will just go and give you a specimen of my talent. You had better take a walk, my lord, while dinner is getting ready look about the premises, and see whether you find them in tenantable condition for a person of your lordship's dignity.

The reader may guess whether I did not stir my stumps; and Scipio, still more eager than myself to take a bird's eye inventory of our goods and chattels, dragged me back and fore from room to room

There was not a corner of the house that we did not peep into, from the garret to the cellar not a closet or a cranny, at least as we supposed, could escape our prying curiosity, and in every fresh room we went into, I had occasion to admire the kindness of don Caesar and his son towards me. I was struck, among other things, with two apartments which were as elegantly furnished as they could be, without misplaced magnificence. One of them was hung with tapestry, the celebrated manufacture of the Low Countries, the velvet bed and chairs were still very handsome, though in the fashion of the time when the Moors possessed the kingdom of Valencia. The furniture of the other room was in the same taste, to wit, an old suit of hangings, made of yellow Genoa damask, with a bed and arm chairs to match, ranged with blue silk. All these effects, which would have furnished but a sorry display in an upholsterer's shop, made no contemptible appearance in their present situation.

After having rummaged over every article of the paraphernalia, my secretary and myself returned to the dining room, where the cloth was laid for two, we sat down, and in an instant they served up so delicious an olla podrida, that we could not help revolving on the various turns of fate below, which had parted the good archbishop of Valencia from his'cook. We had in truth a most catholic and ravenous appetite, a circumstance which added

new zest to our praises and enjoyments Between every succeeding help, my servants, with all the alacrity of fresh and holiday service, filled our large glasses to the brim with wine, the choicest vintage of La Mancha Scipio, not thinking it genteel to express aloud the inward chucklings of his heart at our dainty fare, winked and nodded his delight, and spoke by signs, which I returned with the like dumb eloquence of overflowing satisfaction The remove was a dish of roast quails, flanking a little leveret in high order, just kept long enough for this we left our hash, good as it was, and gorged ourselves to a surfeit on the game When we had eaten as if we had never eaten before, and pledged one another in due proportion, we rose from table and went into the garden, to look out for some cool, pleasant spot, and take our afternoon's nap voluptuously

If hitherto my secretary had goggled satisfaction at what he had seen, he stared wider and grinned broader at this vista vision of the garden He scarcely allowed the comparison to be in favour of the Escorial The reason of its extreme niceness was, that don Caesar, who came backwards and forwards to Luras, took pleasure in improving and ornamenting it All the walks well gravelled and lined with orange trees, a large reservoir of white marble, with a lion in bronze spouting water like a dolphin's deputy in the middle, the beauty of the

flower borders, the profusion and variety of the fruit trees, such pretty particulars as these made Scipio smack his lips, and snuff the air, but his raptures reached then summit at the gradual descent of a long walk, leading to the bailiff's cottage, and overarched by the interwoven boughs of the trees planted on each side. While eulogizing a place so well adapted for a refuge from the intense-ness of the heat, we made a halt, and sat down at the foot of an elm, where sleep required very little cunning to entangle two high-fed, half-tipsy blades, just risen from so voluptuous and voracious a repast.

In about two hours we were startled out of our sleep by the report of musketry, popping so near the head-quarters of our repose, that we apprehended the camp to be attacked. On the alert<sup>1</sup> was the first idea that invaded our dozing minds. That we might procure the most authentic intelligence, in what direction the enemy was approaching, we directed our march towards the bailiff's tenement. There were collected eight or ten clodhoppers, all friends and neighbours, assembled on the green for the purpose of honouring my arrival, just communicated to the vacant senses of the said clodhoppers, by a discharge of fire-aims, whose barrels and furniture might thank me for the unusual favour of a thorough cleaning. The greater part of them were acquainted With my person, having seen me more than once at the castle, while engaged in

the business of my stewardship No sooner did they set eyes on me, than they all shouted in unison; Long life to our new lord and master 1 welcome to Lunas! Then they loaded once again, and fired another volley in honour of the occasion, My habits and manners were softened down to the most condescending urbanity, though with a decorous infusion of distance, lest any degrading constructions might be put upon too unlimited a freedom of address With respect to my protection, I promised it according to the customary charter of newly-installed possessors, and went so far as to throw them a purse of twenty pistoles and this, in my opinion, was the point of all others in my conduct, which touched their hearts most nearly. After this benefaction, I left them at liberty to waste as much powder as they pleased, and withdrew with my secretary into the wood, where we walked to and fro till night-fall, without being at all tired of our rural prospect so many charms had the view of a landscape, heightened by the substantial beauties of ownership in fee-simple, to our elevated and delighted imaginations

The cook, the under-cook, and the scullion were not resting upon their oars all this time. they were working hard to fit up for us an edifice of belly timber, more magnificent than what we had already demolished; so that we were over head and ears in amazement, when on our return to the room where

we had dined, we saw on the table a dish of four roast partridges, with a smothered rabbit on one side, and a fricasseed capon on the other. The second course consisted of pig's ears, jugged game, and chocolate cream. We drank deeply of the most delicious wines, and began to think of going to bed, when it became a matter of doubt whether we could sit up any longer. Then my people, with lighted candles before me, led the way to the best bed-room, where they were all most officious in assisting to undress me; but when they had tendered me my gown and nightcap, I dismissed them with an authoritative undulation of my hand, signifying that their services were dispensed with for the remainder of that night.

Thus I sent them all about their business, keeping Scipio for a little private conference between ourselves, and I led to it by asking him what he thought of my reception, as arranged by order of my noble patrons. Indeed and indeed, answered he, the human heart could not devise any thing more delicious, I only wish we may go on as we have begun. I have no wish of the kind, replied I; it is contrary to my principles to allow that my benefactors should put themselves to so much expense on my account; it would be a downright fraud upon their benevolence. Beside, I could never feel myself at home with servants in the pay of other people; it is just like living in a lodging or

an inn Then it is to be remembered, that I did not come hither to live uipon so expensive a scale What occasion have we for so large an establishment of servants? Our utmost want, with Bertiaud, is a cook, a scullion, and a footman. Though my secretary would not have been at all sorry to table for a continuance at the governor of Valencia's expense, he did not oppose his own luxurious taste to my moral delicacy, but conformed at once to my sentiments, and approved the reduction I was meditating to introduce That point being decided, he left my chamber, and betook himself to his pillow in his own

## CHAPTER IV

*A journey to Valencia, and a visit to the lords of Leyva The conversation of the gentlemen, and Seraphma's demeanour.*

I GOT my clothes off as soon as possible, and went to bed, where, finding no great inclination to sleep, I communed with my own thoughts The mutual attachment between the lords of Leyva and myself was uppemost in the various topics of my contemplation With my heart full of their late

kindness, I determined on setting out for their residence the next day, and quenching my impatience to thank them for their favours. Neither was it a slender gratification, to anticipate another interview with Seraphima, though there was somewhat of alloy in that pleasure it was impossible to reflect without shuddering, that I should at the same time have to encounter the glances of dame Lorenza Sephora, who might not be greatly delighted at the renewal of our acquaintance, should her memory happen to stumble upon the circumstances connected with a certain box on the ear With my mind exhausted by all these different suggestions, my eyelids at length closed, and the sun had peeped in at my window, long before they turned upon their hinges

I was soon out of bed, and dressed myself with all possible expedition, in the earnest desire of prosecuting my intended journey Just as I had finished my hasty operations, my secretary came into the room Scipio, said I, you behold a man on the point of setting out for Valencia • I ought to lose no time in paying my respects to those noblemen, to whom I am indebted for my little independence; every moment of delay in the performance of this duty throws a new weight of ingratitude on my conscience As for you, my friend, there is no necessity for your attendance, stay here during my absence; I shall come back to you within the space

of a week. Heaven speed you, sir answered *her* be sure you do not slight don Alphonso and his father they seem to me to thrill with the kindly vibrations of friendship, and to be unbounded in their acknowledgment of obligation: gratitude and benevolence are so uncommon in people of rank, that they deserve to be made the most of where found I sent a message to Bertrand, to hold himself in readiness for setting out, and took my chocolate while he was harnessing the mules When all was prepared, I got into my carriage, after having directed my people to consider my secretary as master of the house in my absence, and to obey his orders as if they were my own

I got to Valencia in less than four hours, and dived at once to the governor's stables, where I alighted and left my equipage On going to the house, I was informed that don Cæsar and his son were together I did not wait for an introduction, but went in without ceremony, and addressing myself to both of them, Servants, said I, never send in their names to their masters, he is an old piece of family furniture, not ornamental indeed, but of a fashion when gratitude was neither out of date nor out of countenance These words were accompanied with an effort to throw myself on my knees, but they anticipated my purpose, and embraced me one after the other with all possible evidence of sincere affection Well then! my dear Santillane, said'

don Alphonso, you have been at Liras to take possession of your little property. Yes, my lord, answered I, and my next request is that you would be pleased to take it back again. What is your reason for that? replied he. Is there any thing about it, at all offensive to your taste? Not in the place itself, rejoined I on the contrary, that is every thing that my heart can wish. the only fault I have to find With it, is that the kitchen smells too strongly of the hierarchy, a lay Christian should not live like an archbishop, besides that there are three times as many servants as are necessary, and consequently you are put to an expense at once enormous and useless.

Had you accepted the annuity of two thousand ducats which we offered you at Madrid, said don Caesar, we should have thought it enough to give you the mansion furnished as it is, but you know, you refused it, and we felt it but right to do what we have done as an equivalent. Your bounty has been too lavsh, answered I the gift of the estate was the utmost taut to which it should have been extended, and that was more than sufficient to crown my largest wishes. But to say nothing about what it has cost you to keep up so great and expensive an establishment I declare to you most solemnly that these people stand in my way, and are a great annoyance. In one word, gentlemen, either take back your boon, or give me leave to

enjoy it in my own way. I pronounced these last words so much as if I was IN earnest, that the father and son, not meaning to lay me under any unpleasant restraint, at length gave me their permission to manage my household as it should seem expedient to my better judgment

I was thanking them very kindly for having granted me that privilege, without which a dukedom would have been but splendid slavery, when don Alphonso interrupted me by saying, My dear Gil Bias, I will introduce you to a lady who will be extremely happy to see you. Thus preparing me for the interview, he took me by the hand and led the way to Seraphina's apartment, who set up a scream of joy on recognizing me. Madam, said the governor, I flatter myself that the visit of our friend Santiliane at Valencia is not less acceptable to you than to myself. On that head, answered she, he may rest confidently assured time has not obliterated the remembrance of the service which he once rendered me, and to that must be added a new debt of gratitude incurred on the score of your obligations. I told the governor's lady, that I was already too well requited for the danger which I had shared in common with her deliverers, in exposing my life for her sake. compliments to the like effect were bandied about for some time on both sides, when don Alphonso motioned to quit Seraphina's room. We then went back to don

CÆsar, whom we found in the saloon with a fashionable party, who were come to dinner.

All these gentlemen were introduced, and paid their compliments to me in the politest manner, nor did their attentions relax in assiduity, when don CÆsar told them that I had been one of the duke of Lerma's principal advisers. Some of them might not be unacquainted that don Alphonso had been promoted to the government of Valencia by my interest for political secrets are seldom kept. However that might be, while we were at table, the conversation principally turned on the new cardinal. Some of the company either were, or affected to be, his unqualified admirers, while others allowed his merit upon the whole, but thought it had been rather over-rated. I plainly saw through their design of drawing me on to enlarge on the subject of his eminence, and to gratify their taste for scandal with court anecdotes at his expense. I could have been well enough pleased to have delivered my real sentiments on his character, but I kept my tongue within my teeth, and thereby passed in the estimation of the guests for a close, confidential, politic, trust worthy young statesman.

The party respectively retired home after dinner, to take their usual nap; when don CÆsar and his son, yielding to a similar inclination, shut themselves up in their apartments.

For my own part, full of impatience to see a town

which I had so often heard extolled for its beauty, I went out of the governor's palace with the intention of walking through the stieets. At the gate a man accosted me with the following address. Will signor de Santillane allow me to take the liberty of paying my respects to him ? I asked him who, and what he was I am don Caesar's valet-de-chambie, answered he but was one of his ordinary footmen during your stewardship, I used to make my court to you every morning, and you used to take a great deal of notice of me I regularly gave you intelligence of what was passing in the house Do you recollect my apprising you one day that the village surgeon of Leyva was privately admitted into dame Lorenza Sephora's bed-chamber It is a circumstance which I have by no means forgotten, replied I But now that we aie talking of that foimidable duenna, what is become of her Alas resumed he, the poor creature moped and dwindled after your departure, and at length gave up the ghost, more to the ghost of Seraphma than of don Alphonso, who seemed to consider hei death as no great evil

Don CÆsar's valet-de-chambre, having thus acquainted me with Sephora's melancholy end, made an humble apology for having presumed to stop my walk, and then left me to continue my progress. I could not help paying the tnbut of a sigh to the memory of that ill-fated duenna; and her decease affected me the more, because I taxed myself with

that melancholy catastrophe, though a moment's reflection would\*have convinced me, that the grave owed its precious prey to the inroads of her cancer, rather than to the cruel charms of my person.

I looked with an eye of pleasuie upon every thing worth notice in the town The archbishop's marble palace feasted my eyes with all the anagnifience of architecture, nor were the piazzas which surrounded the exchange much inferior in commercial grandeur; but ft large building at a distance, with a great crowd standing before the doors, Attracted all my attention. I went nearel, to ascertain the reason why so great a concourse of both sexes was collected; and was soon let into the secret by reading the following inscription in letters of gold on a tablet of black marble over the door *la posuda de los Representantes* The play-bills announced for that day a new tragedy, neverper\*formed and gave the name of don Gabriel Tnaqneao as the author

The Theatre.

## CHAPTER V

*Gil Blas goes to the play, and sees a new tragedy  
The success of the piece The public taste at  
Valencia*

I STOPPED for some minutes before the door to make my remarks on the people who were going in. There were some of all sorts and sizes. Here was a knot of genteel-looking fellows, whose tailois at least had done justice to their fashionable pretensions, there a mob of ill-favoured and ill-mannered mortals, in a garb to identify vulgarity. To the right was a bevy of noble ladies, alighting from their carriages to take possession of their private boxes, to the left a tribe of female traders in lubricity, who came to sell their wares in the lobby. This mixed concourse of spectators, as various in their minds as in their faces, gave me an itching inclination to increase their number. Just as I was taking my check, the governor and his lady drove up. They spied me out in the crowd, and having sent for me, took me with them to their box, where I placed myself behind them, in such a position as to converse at my ease with either.

The theatre was filled with spectators from the ceiling downwards, the pit thronged almost to suf-

focation, and the stage crowded with knights of the three military orders Here is a full house' said I to don Alphonso You are not to consider that as any thing extraordinary, answered he the tragedy now about to be produced is from the pen of don Gabriel Tnaquero, the most fashionable dramatic writer of his day Whenever the play-bill announces any novelty from this favourite author, the whole town of Valencia is in a bustle The men as well as the women talk incessantly on the subject of the piece all the boxes are taken, and, on the first night of performance, there is a ask of broken limbs in getting in, though the price of admission is doubled, with the exception of the pit, which is too authoritative a part of the house for the piopnetors to tamper with its patience What a paroxysm of partiality said I to the governor This eager cunosity of the public, this hot-headed impatience to be present at the first representation of don Gabriel's pieces, gives me a magnificent idea of that poet's genius

At this period of oui conversation the curtam rose We immediately left off talking, to fix our whole attentron on the stage The applauses were rapturous even at the prologue as the performance advanced, every sentiment and situation, nay, almost every line of the piece called forth a burst of acclamation, and at the end of each act the clapping of hands was so loud and incessant, as almost

to bring the bujding about our ears After the dropping of the curtain, the author was pointed out to me, going about from box to box, and with all the modesty of a successful poet, submitting his head to the imposition of those laurels, which the genteeler, and especially the fairer part of the audience had prepared for his coionation

We returned to the governor's palace, where we were met by a party of three or four gentlemen. Besides these mere amateuis, there were two veteran authors of considerable eminence m their line, and a gentleman of Madrid with tolerably fair claims to critical authority and judgment They had all been at the play' The new piece was the only topic of conversation during supper-time Gentlemen, said a knight of St James, what do you think of this tragedy? Has it not every claim to the character of a finished work Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn, a hand to touch the true chords of pity, and sweep the lyre of poetry, requisites how larely, and yet how admirably united! In a word, it is the performance of a peison mixing in the higher circles of society There can be no possible difference of opinion on that subject, said a knight of Alcantara The piece is full of strokes which Apollo himself might have aimed, and of perplexities contrived so that none but the author himself could have unravelled them I appeal to that acute and ingenious stranger added he, addressing his discourse to the

Castilian gentleman; he looks to me like a good judge, and I will lay a wager that he is on my side of the question. Take care how you stake on at uncertainty, my worthy knight, answered the gentleman with a sarcastic smile. I am not of your piovmetal school. we do not pass our judgment so hastily at Madrid. Far from sentencing a piece on its first representation, we are jealous of its apparent merit while aided by scenic deception, our fancies and our feelings may be earned away for the moment, but our serious decision is suspended till we have read the work; and the most consnion result of its appeal to the press is a defalcation from its powers of pleasing on the stage.

Thus you perceive, pursued he, that it is our practice to examine a work of genius closely, before we stamp on it the mark of a stock piece; its author's fame, let it ring as loudly as it may, can never confound our exactness of discrimination. When Lope de Vega himself or Calderona ventured on the boards, they encountered rigid critics, though in an audience which doted on them, critics who would not sign their passport to the regions of immortality, till they had sifted their claims to be admitted there.

That is a little too much, interrupted the knight of St. James. We are not quite so cautious as you. It is not our custom to wait *tot* the printing of a piece, in order to decide on its reputation. By the

very first performance it sinks or swims. It does not even seem necessary to be inconveniently attentive to the business of the stage. It is sufficient that we know it for a production of don Gabriel, to be persuaded that it combines every excellence. The works of that poet may justly be considered as commencing a new era, and fixing the criterion of good taste. The school of Lope and Calderona was the mere cart of Thespians, compared with the polished scenes of this great dramatic master. The gentleman, who looked up to Lope and Calderona as the Sophocles and Euripides of the Spaniards, could not easily be brought to acknowledge such wild canons of criticism. This is dramatic heresy with a vengeance! exclaimed he. Since you compel me, gentlemen, to decide like you on the fallacious evidence of a first night, I must tell you that I am not at all satisfied with this new tragedy of your don Gabriel. As a poem, it abounds more with glittering conceits than with passages of pathos or delineations of nature. The verses, three out of four, are defective either in measure or rhyme, the characters, clumsily imagined or incongruously supported, and the thoughts have often the obscurity of a riddle without its ingenuity.

The two authors at table, who, with a prudence equally commendable and unusual, had said nothing for fear of lying under the imputation of jealousy, could not help assenting to the last

speaker's opinions by their looks, which warranted me in concluding that their silence was less owing to the peifection of the work, than to the dictates of personal policy As for the military critics, they got to their old topic of ringing the changes on don Gabriel, and exalted him to a level with the under tenants of Olympus This extravagant association with the derm-gods, this blind and stiff-necked idolatry, divorced the Castihan from his little stock of patience, so that, raising his hands to heaven, he broke out abruptly into a volley of enthusiasm 0 divine Lope de Vega, sublime and unrivalled genius, who hast left an immeasurable space between thee and all the Gabriels who would light their tapers from thy bright effulgence' and thou, mellow, soft-voiced Calderona, whose elegance and sweetness, rejecting buskined rant and tragic swell, leign with undisputed sway over the affections, fear not, either of you, lest your altars should be overturned by this tongue-tied nursling of the muses It will be the utmost of his renown, if posterity, before whose eyes your works shall live in daily view, and form their dear delight, shall enrol his name, as matter of history and curious record, on the list of obsolete authors.

This animated apostrophe, for which the company was not at all prepared, raised a hearty laugh; after which we all lose fion table and withdrew An apartment had been got ready for me by don Al-

phonso's order, where I fouted a good bed; and my lordship, lying down in luxurious weaftness, weft to sleep upon the tag of the Castihan gentleinan's inpassioned vindication, and di earned most crustily of the injustice done to Lope and Calderona by ignorant pretenders

## CHAPTER VI

*Gil Bias, walking about the streets of Valencia, ineets with a inan of sanctity whose pious face he had seen soinewhere else What sort of man this man of sanctity turns out to be*

As I had not been able to complete toy view of the city on the preceding day, I got up betimes in the jnorning with the intention of taking another walk. In the street I remarked a Carthusian fnai, who doubtless was thus early in inotion to proinote the interests of his order. He walked with his eyes fixed on the ground, and a gait so holy and conteinplative, as to inspire every passengei with religious awe. His path was in the saine direction as mine I looked at him with than ordinary curiosity, and could not help fancying it was don Raphael, that man of shifts and, expedients, who,

has already secured so honourable a niche in the temple of fame, (*See the first and second volumes of my memoirs*)

I was so utterly astonished, so thrown off my balance by this ineeting, that instead of accosting the monk, I remaned inotionless for some seconds, which gave him time to get the start of me,. Just heaven! said I, were there ever two faces more exactly alike? I do not know what to make of it 1 It seems incredible that Raphael should turn up in such a guise! And yet how is it possible to be any one else I felt too great a curiosity to get at the truth, not to pursue the enquiry. Having ascertained the way to the inonastery of the Carthusian I repaired the ther Immediately, in the hope of coining across the object of my search on his return, and with the full intent of stopping and parleying with him But it was quite unnecessary to wait for his arrival, to enlighten my mind upon the subject • on reaching the convent gate, another physiognoiny, such as few persons had read without paying for their lesson, resolved all my doubts into certainty; for the friar who served in the capacity of porter was unquestionably my old and godly-visaged servant, Ainbrose de Lamela

Our surprise was equal on both sides, at meeting again in suoh a place. Is not this a play upon the senses? said h paying my comphments to hiin. Is It actvally one of my frinds who presents hiinself to

iny astonished sight    He did not know me again at first, or probably might pretend not to do so but, reflecting within himself that it was in vain to deny his own identity, he assumed the start of a man who all at once hits upon a circumstance which had hitherto escaped his recollection    Ah ! signor Gil Blas, exclaimed he, excuse my not recognizing your person immediately    Since I have lived in this holy place, every faculty of my soul has been absorbed in the performance of the duties, prescribed by our rules, so that by degrees I lose the remembrance of all worldly objects and events

After a separation of ten years, said I, it gives me much pleasure to find you again in so venerable a garb    For my part, answered he, it fills me with shame and confusion to appear in it before a man who has been an eye-witness of my guilty courses    These ghostly weeds are at once the charm of my present life, and the condemnation of my former    Alas' added he, heaving a righteous sigh, to be worthy of wearing it, my earlier years should have been passed in primitive innocence.    By this discourse, so rational and edifying, replied I, it is plain, my dear brother, that the finger of the lord has been upon you, that you are marked out for a vessel of sanctification    I tell you once again, I am delighted at it, and would give the world to know in what miraculous manner you and Raphael were led into the path of the righteous; for I am persuaded that

## GIL E

it was his own self whom  
as a Caithusian I was extremely sorry afterwards,  
not to have stopped and spoken to him in the  
street, and I am waiting here to apologize for my  
neglect on his return.

You were not mistaken, said Lamela it was don  
Raphael himself whom you saw, and, as for the  
particulars of our conversion, they are as follow  
After parting with you near Segorba, we struck into  
the Valencia road, with the design of bettering our  
trade by some new speculation Chance or destiny  
one day led oui steps into the church of the Car-  
thusians, while service was pei forining in the choir  
The deineanour of the brethren attracted our notice,  
and we experienced in our own pesons the in-  
voluntary homage which vice pays to virtue We  
admired the fervour with which they poured forth  
their devotions, then looks of pious mortification,  
their deadness to the pleasures of the world and the  
flesh, and in the settled composure of their counte-  
nances, the outward sign of an approving conscience  
within

While making these observations, we fell into atrain of thought  
hungry and thirsty soul we compared our habits of  
life with the einployinents of these holy men, and  
the wide difference between our spiritual conditions  
filled us with confusion and affright. Lamela, said  
don Raphael, as we went out of church, how do

you stand affected by what we have just seen For for part, there is no disguising the truth, my mind is ill at ease Emotions, new and indescribable, are rushing upon my mind, and, for the first time in my life, I reproach in myself with the wickedness of past actions I am just in the same temper of soul, answered I in my iniquities are all drawn up in an array against me, they beset me, they stare me in the face, in my heart, hitherto proof against all the arrows of remorse, is at this inoffensive shot through and through, torn and disfigured, tainted and destroyed Ah! in my dear Ambrose, resumed my partner, we are two stray sheep, whom our heavenly Father, in mercy, would lead back gently to the fold It is he himself, my child, it is he who waits and guides us Let us not be deaf to the call of his voice, let us abandon all our wicked courses, let us begin from this day to work out our salvation with diligence and in the spirit of repentance we had better spend the remainder of our days in this convent, and consecrate them to penitence and devotion

I applauded Raphael's sentiment, continued brother Ambrose, and we formed the glorious resolution of becoming Carthusians To carry it into effect, we applied to the venerable prior, who was no sooner inadequately acquainted with our purpose, than, to ascertain whether our call was from the world above or the world beneath, he appointed us to cells, and all

the strictness of monkish discipline, for a whole year We acted up to the rules with equal regularity and fortitude, and, by way of reward, were admitted among the novices Our condition was so much what we wished it, and our hearts were so full of religious zeal, that we underwent the toils of our novitiate with unflinching courage. When that was over, we professed, after which don Raphael, appearing admirably well qualified, both by natural talent and various experience, for the management of secular concerns, was chosen assistant to an old friar who was at that time proctor The son of Luanda would infinitely have preferred dedicating every remaining moment of his existence to prayer, but he found it necessary to sacrifice his taste for devotion, in furtherance of the general prosperity He entered with so much zeal and knowledge into the interests of the house, that he was considered as the most eligible person to succeed the old proctor, who died three years afterwards Don Raphael accordingly fills that office at present, and it may truly be said that he discharges his duty to the entire satisfaction of all our fathers, who praise in the highest terms his conduct in the administration of our temporalities What is most of all miraculous, and shews the hand of heaven in his conversion, is that, with such an accumulation of business rushing in upon him in his burse department, his regards are inalienably fixed on the world to come.

When business leaves him but a moment to recruit nature, instead of lavishing the short period in indulgence his thoughts wing their way into the regions of devout and holy meditation. In short, he is the most exemplary member of this body.

At this period of our conversation I interrupted Lainela by an ebullition of joy to which I gave vent at the sight of Raphael coming in. Here he is exclaimed I behold that righteous bursar for whom I have been so impatiently waiting. With a leap and a bound did I run to meet and embrace him. He submitted to the hug with his newly-acquired resignation, and, without betraying the slightest shock at meeting with an old companion of his profane hours, his words were dictated by the spirit of gentleness and humility. The powers above be praised, signo de Santillane, the powers be praised for this kind providence whereby we meet again. In good truth, my-dear Raphael, replied I, your happy destiny pleases me as much as if it had been my own good-luck brother Ambrose has told me the whole story of your conversion, and the tale almost moved me to a similar change. What a glorious lot for you two, my friends, when you have reason to flatter yourselves with being among that picked number of the elect, who have eternal happiness thrust upon them whether they will or no!

Two miserable sinners like ourselves, misled the son of Luanda, with an air which marked the

extreme of sanctified inorality, must not hope that our own merits are of weight enough to save our souls, but even the wicked one who repenteth, findeth grace with the Father of mercies And you signor Gil Blas, added he, is it not time to lay in a claim for pardon of the offences which you have committed What is your business here in Valencia Are you not hankering after some office of devil's deputy, and making shipwreck of your voyage to another world? Not so, by the blessing of heaven, answered I since I turned my back on the court, I have led a very inoral sort of life, sometimes enjoying rural recreations on an estate of mine at a few leagues distance from this town, and sometimes coining hither to pass my time with my friend the governor, whom you both of you must know perfectly well

On this cue I related to them the story of don Alphonso de Leyva They heard the particulars with attention, and on my telling them that I had carried to Sainuel Simon, on the part of that nobleman, the three thousand ducats of which we had robbed him, Lamela interrupted the thread of my narrative, and, addressing his discourse to Raphael, said Father Hilary, if this be true, the honest vender of wares has no reason to quarrel with a robbery which has paid him fifty per cent, and our consciences as far as that indictment goes, may bask in the sunshine of acquitted innocence. Bro-

ther Ainbrose and I, said the bursar did actually on the assumption of the habit, send Samuel Sumon fifteen hundred ducats pnvately, by a pious ecclesiastic who made a pilgrnmage to Xelva for the sole purpose of accomplishing this restitution but it will go hard with Sainuel at the general reckoning, if he for filthy lucre could soil his fingers with that sum, after having been reiinbursed in full by signor de Santillane But, said I, how do you know that your fifteen hundred ducats were faithfully paid into his hands Unquestionably they were exclained don Raphael I would answer for the disinterested purity of that ecclesiastic, as soon as for my own I would be your collateral security, said Lainela, he is a priest of the strictest sanctity, a sort of universal almoner, and though many times cited for sums of money, deposited with him for charitable uses, he has always nonsuited the plaintiffs, and gone out of court with an auginentation of alins-giving notoriety

Our conversation continued for some time longer at length we parted, with many a pious exhortation on their side, always to have the fear of the Lord before my eyes, and with many an earnest intreaty on mine, that they would remember me constantly in their prayers Don Alphonso was now the first object of my search You will never guess, said I, with whom I have just had a long conference I aim but now come from two venerable Carthusians of

you acquaintance; the name of the one is father Hilary, that of the other, brother Ainbrose. You are mistaken, answered don Alphonso, I am not acquainted with a single Carthusian. Pardon me, replied I, you have seen brother Ainbrose at Xelva in the capacity of coininissary, and father Hilary as register to the inquisition. Oh heaven! exclÆmed the govenor with surpnse, can it be within the bounds of possibility that Raphael and Lamela should have turned Carthusians? It is even so, answered I they professed several years ago. The foriner is bursar and proctor to the convent, the latter, porter

The son of don CÆsar rubbed his foiehead twice or thrice, then shaking his head, These woishipful officers of the inquisition, said he, inost assuredly purpose playing over the old faice on a new stage here. You judge of them by prejudice, answered I, from the iimpression of their characters as men of a. but had you been edified by their lectures as I have been, you would think more favourably of their holiness. To be sure, it is not for mortal men to fathom the depths of other men's hearts; but, to all appearance, they are two prodigals returned home. It possibly may be so, replied don Alphonso. there are many instances of libertines, who hide their heads in cloisters, after having scandalized human nature by their obliquities, to expiate then offences

by a severe penance I heartily wish that our two monks may be such libertines restored

Well ' and why not said I They have embraced the monastic life of their own accord, and have squared their conduct for a length of time according to the maxims of their order You may say what you please, letorted the governor, but I do not like the convent rents being received by this father Hilary, of whom I cannot help entertaining a very untoward opinion When the fine story he told us of his adventures comes across my mind, I tremble for the reverend brotherhood I am willing to believe, with you, that he has taken the vow with the pious intention of keeping it, but the blaze of gold may be too much for the weakness of his regenerated eye-sight It is bad policy to lock up a reformed drunkard in a wine cellar

In the course of a few days don Alphonso's misgivings were fully justified, these two official props and stays of the establishment ran away with the years revenue This news, which was immediately noised about the town, could not do otherwise than set the tongues of the wits in motion, for they always make themselves merry at the crosses and losses of the well-endowed religious orders As for the governor and myself, we condoled with the Carthusians, but kept our acquaintance with the apostate pilferers in the back ground.

## CHAPTER VII

*Gil Blas returns to his seat at Lirias. Scipio's agreeable intelligence, and a reformation in the domestic arrangements*

I PASSED a week at Valencia in the first company, living on equal terms with the best of the nobility. Plays, balls, concerts, grand dinners, ladies' parties, all things that heart could wish or vanity grow tall upon, were provided for me by the governor and his lady, to whom I paid my court so dexterously, that they were heartily sorry to see me set out on my return to Lmas. They even obliged me, before they would let me go, to engage for a division of my time between then and me her inheritance. It was determined that I should spend the winter at Valencia, and the summer at me seat. After this bargain, me benefactors left me at liberty to tear myself from them., and go where their kindness would be always staring me in the face.

Scipio, who was waiting impatiently for me return, was ready to jump out of his skin for joy at the sight of me, and his ecstasies were doubled at me cucuinstantial account of the journey. And now for your history, me friend, said I, taking breath. to **what** moral uses have you turned the solitary period of

me absence? Has the time passed agreeably? As well, answered he, as it could with a servant to Whom nothing is so dear as the presence of his master I have walked over our little doman, circuitously and diagonally. sometimes seated on the margin of a fountain in our wood, I have taken pleasure in beholding the transparency of its waters, which are as pellucid as those of the sacred spring, whose projection from the rock made the vast forest of Albunea to resound with the roar of the cascade: some times lying at the foot of a tree, I have listened to the song of the linnet or the nightingale At other times I have hunted or fished; and, what has given me more rational delight than all these pastimes, I have whiled away many a profitable hour in the Improvement of my mind

I interrupted my secretary in a tone of eager enquiry, to ask where he had procured books I found them, said he, in an elegant library here in the house, whither master JoachIm took me Heyday ! in what corner, resumed I, can this said library be Did we not go over the whole building on the day of our arrival You fancied so, rejoined he; but you are to know that we only explored three sides of the square, and forgot the fourth. It was there that don CÆsar, when he came to Ltrias, employed part of his time in reading There are in this library some very good books, left as a never-fading phylactery against the blue devils, when our

gardens despoiled of Flora's treasure, and our woods of their leafy honours, shall no longer challenge those Miscreant invaders to coMbat in the forest or the bower. The lords of Leyva have not done things by halves; but have catered for the MInd as well as for the body.

This intelligence filled Me with sincere rapture. I was shewn to the fourth side of the square, and feasted with an intellectual banquet. Don Ceesar's room I iinmediately deterinined to Make me own. That nobleinan's bed was still there, with correspondent furniture, consisting of historical tapestry, representing the rape of the Sabine women by the Romans. From the bed-chamber, I went into a closet fitted up with low bookcases well filled, and over them the portraits of the Spanish kings. Near a window whence yon command a prospect of a most bewitching country, there was an ebony writing-desk and a large sofa, covered with black morocco. But I gave me attention principally to the library. It was composed of philosophers, poets, historians; and abounded in romances Don CÆsar seemed to give the preference to that kght reading, if one might judge by the profusion of supply. I must own to me shame, that me taste was not at aII above the level of those productions, notwithstanding the extravagances they delight in stringing together; whether it was owing to me not being it very critical reader at that time, or because the

Spaniards are naturally addicted to the marvellous. I must nevertheless plead in me own justification, that I was alive to the charms of a sprightly and popular morality, and that Lucan, Horace, and Erasmus became me favourite and standard authors

My friend, said I to Scipio, when me eyes had couraed over me library, here is wherewithal to feed and pamper our minds, but our present business is to reform our household On that subject, I can spare you a great deal of trouble, answered he During your absence, I have sifted your peopk thoiously, and flatter my self, it is no empty boast to say that I know them Let us begin with master Joachin I take him to be as great a scoundrel as ever breathed, and have no doubt but he was turned away from the archbishop's for errors, which were too great to be excepted in the passing of his accounts Yet we must keep him for two reasons the first, because he is a good cook, and the second, because I shall always have an eye over him, I shall peep into his actions like a jackdaw into a marrow-bone, and he must be a more cunning fellow than I take him for, to evade me vigilance I have already told him that you intended discharging three fourths of your establishment This -declaration stuck in his stoinach; and he assured me that, owing to his extreme desire of living with you, he would be satisfied with half his present wages rather than be turned off, which made me

suspect that he was tied to the string of some petticoat in the hamlet, and did not like to break up his quarters. As for the under-cook, he is a drunkard, and the porter a foul-inouthed Cerberus of whose guardianship our gates are in no want, neither is the gaine-keeper a necessary evil. I shall take the latter office meself, as you may see to-morrow, when we have got our fowling-pieces in order, and are provided with powder and shot. With regard to the footmen, one of them is an Arragonese, and to me mind a very good sort of fellow. We will keep him, but all the rest are such lapscalhons, that I would not advise you to harbour one of them, if you wanted an army of attendants.

After having fully debated that point we resolved to keep well with the cook, the scullion, the Arragonese, and to get rid of the lemainder as decently as we could. ail which was planned and executed on the same day, mollifying the bitter dose by the application of a few pistoles, which Scipio took from our strong box, and distributed among them as from me. When we had carried this reform into effect, order was soon established in our mansion; we divided the business fairly among our remaming people, and began to look into our expenses. I could willingly have been contented with very frugal com-  
-ons ; but me secretary, loving high dishes and relishing bits, was not a man who would suffer master Joachim to hold his place as a sinecure. He

kept his talents in such constant play, working double tides at dinner and at supper, that any one would have thought we had been converted by father Hilary, and were working out the term of our probation

## CHAPTER VIII

### *The loves of Gil Blas and the fair Antoma*

Two days after me return from Valencia to Linas, clodpole Basil, me farming man, came at me dressing-tiine to beg the favour of introducing his daughter Antoma, who was very desirous, as he said, to have the honour of paying her respects to her new master I answered that it was very proper, and would be well received He withdrew, and in a few minutes returned with his peerless Antoma That epithet, though bold, will not be thought extravagant, in the case of a girl from sixteen to eighteen years of age, uniting to regulai features, the finest coinplexion and the brightest eyes in the world She was dressed in nothing better than a stuff gown; but a stature somewhat above the female standard, a dignified deportment, and such gracea

as soared higher than the mere freshness and glow of youth, commucated to her rustic attire the somplicity of classical costuine. She had no cap on her head, her hair was fastened behind with a knot of flowers, according to the chaste severity of the Spartan fashionables.

When she illumined me chamber with her presence, I was struck as much on a heap by her beauty, as ever were the princes, knights, nobles, and strangers assembled at the solemn feast and ournament of Charlermain, by the personal charms of Angelica. Instead of receiving Antonia with modish indifference, and paying her complmeats of course, instead of ringing the changes on her father's happiness in possessing so lovely a daughter, I stood stock still staring, gaping, stammering I could not have uttered an articulate sound for the universal world. Scipio, who saw clearly what was the matter with me, took the words out of me mouth and accepted those bills of admuration which me affairs were in too much disorder to admiit of me duly honounmg. For her part, me figure being shrouded by a dressing-gown and night-cap, like the orb of day by a winter fog, she accosted me without being shainefaced, and paid her duty in terms which fired all the combustibles in me composition, though her words were but the holiday expressions of commonplace salutation. In the mean time, while me secretary, Basil, and his daughter were engaged in re-

ciprocal exchange of civility, I found me senses -again, and passed from one extreine of absurdity to another, just as if I had thought that a hair-brained loquacity would be a set-off against the idiotic silence of me first encounter I exhausted all me stock of well-bred rhodoinontade, and expressed meself with so unguarded a freedom, as to make Basil look about him so that he, with his eye upon me as a man who would set every engine at work to seduce Antonia, was in a huiry to get her safely out of me apartment, with a resolved purpose, probably, of withdrawing her for ever form me pursuit

Scipio finding himself alone with ine, said with a smile 'Here is another defence for you against the blue devils ' I did not know that your farining man had so pretty a daughter, for I had never seen her before, though I have been twice at his house. He must have taken infinite pains to keep her out of the way, and it is Impossible to be angry with him for it. What the plague! here is a inorsel for a liquorish palate' But there seems to be no necessity for blazoning her perfections to you, their very first glance dazzled you out of countenance I do not deny it, answered I Ah! me beloved fnend, I have surely seen an inhabitant of the lealms above; the electrclal spark now thrills through all me frame, it scorches like lightning, yet tingles like the vivifying fluid at me heart.

You delight toe beyond measure, replied me se-

Cretary, by giving Me to understand that you have at length fallen in love Nothing but a mistress was wanting, to complete your rural establishment at all points. Thanks to heaven, you are now likely to be accommodated in every way I am well aware, that we shall have a hard matter to elude Basil's vigilance, but leave that to me,' and I will undertake before the end of three days to manage a private meeting for you with Antoma Master Scipio, said I, it is not so sure that you would be able to keep your word, but at all events, I have not the least desire to make the experiment I will have nothing to do with the nun of that girl, for she is an angel, and does not deserve to be numbered among the fallen ones. Therefore, instead of laying the guilt upon your soul of assisting me in her dishonour, I have made up my mind to marry her with your kind help, supposing her heart not to be pre-occupied by a prior attachment I had no idea, said he, of your directly plunging head-long into the cold bath of matrimony The generality of landlords, in your place, would stand upon the ancient tenure of manorial rights. they would not deal with Antonia upon the square of modern law and gospel, till after failure in the establishment of their feudal privileges. But though this may be the way of the world, do not suppose that I am by any means against your honourable passion, or at all wish to dissuade you from your purpose. Your bailiff's

daughter deserves the distinction you design for her, if she can give you the fiist fruits of her heart, an offering of sensibility and gratitude: that is what I shall ascertain this very day by talking with her father, and possibly with her.

My agent was a man to transact his business according to the letter He went to see Basil privately, and in the evening came to     in me closet, where I waited for him with Impatience, somewhat exasperated by apprehension. There was a slyness in his countenance, whence me prognostic inclined to the brighter side Judging, said I, by that look of suppressed merriment, you are come to acquaint me that I shall soon be at the summit of human bliss Yes, me dear master, answered he, the heavens smile upon your vows I have talked the matter over with Basd and his daughter, declaring your intentions without reserve. The father is delighted at the idea of your asking his blessing as a son-in-law, and you may set your heart at rest about Antonia's taste in a husband Darts and flames ! cried I in an ecstasy of amorous transport • What' am I so happy as to have made meself agreeable to that lovely creature Never question it, replied he • she loves you already It is true, she has not owned so much by word of mouth; but me assurance rests on the taie-telling sparkle of her eye, when your proposals were made known to her And yet you have a rival! A rival! exclained with a faultennng voice

and a cheek blanched with fear. Do not let that give you the least uneasiness, said he: your competitor cannot bid very high, for he is no other than master Joachim, your cook Ah! the hangdog' said I, with an involuntary shout of laughter this is the reason then why he had so great an objection to being turned out of me service Exactly so, answered Scipio within these few days he made proposals of marriage to Antonia, who politely declined them With submission to your better judgement, replied I, it would be expedient, at least so it strikes me, to get rid of that strange fellow, before he is informed of me intended match with Basil's daughter a cook, as you are aware, is a dangerous rival. You are perfectly in the right, rejoined me trusty counsellor we must clear the preinises of him. he shall receive his discharge form me to-morrow morning, before he puts a finger in the fricandeaus, thus you will have nothing more to fear either form his poisonous sauces or bewitching tongue Yet it goes rather against the grain with me, to part with so good a cook but I sacrifice the interests of me own belly to the preservation of your precious person You need not, said I, take on so for his loss: he had no exclusive patent, and I will send to Valencia for a cook, who shall outcook all his fine cookery. According to me proimise, I wrote immediately to don Alphonso, to let him know that our kitchen wanted a prime minister and on the following day he filled

up the vacancy in so worthy a manner, as reconciled Scipio at once to the change in culinary politics.

Though me adroit and active secretary had assured me of Antonia's secret self-congratulation on the conquest of her landlord's heart, I could not venture to rely solely on his report I was fearful lest he should have been entrapped by false appearances To be more certain of me bliss, I determin'd on speaking in person to the fair Antonia I therefore went to Basil's house, and confirm'd to him what me ambassador had announced. This honest peasant, of patriarchal simplicity and golden-aged frankness, after having heard me through, did not hesitate to own that it would be the greatest happiness of his life to give me his daughter but, added he, you are by no means to suppose that it is because you are "lord of the manor. Were you still steward to don Caesar and don Alphonso, I should prefer you to all other suitors who might apply I have always felt a sort of kindness towards you, and nothing vexes me, but that Antonia has not a thumping fortune to bring with her I want not the vile dross," said I her person is the only dowry that I covet Your humble servant for that, cried he but you will not settle accounts with me after that fashion, I am not a beggar, to marry me\* daughter upon charity. Basil de Buenotriga is in circumstances, by the blessing of providence, to portion her off decently; and I mean that she should set out a little sup-

per, if you are to be at the expense of dinners. In a word, the rental of this estate is only five hundred ducats • I shall raise it to a thousand on the strength of this marriage.

Just as you please, me dear Basil, replied I, we are not likely to have any dispute about money inatters We are both of a mind, all that remains is to get your daughter's consent. You have mine, said he, and that is enough Not altogether so, answered I: though yours may be absolutely necessary, no business can be done without hers. Hers follows mine of course, replied he, I should like to catch her murmuring against me sovereign commands Antonia, rejoined I, with dutiful subinission to paternal authority, is ready without question to obey your will implicitly in all things but I know not whether in the present instance she would do so without violence to her own feelings; and, should that be the case, I could never forgive myself for being the occasion of unhappiness to her; in short, it is not enough that I obtain her hand form you, if her heart is to heave a sigh at the decision of her destiny Oh blessed virgin! said Basil, all these fine doctrines of philosophy are far above me reach; .speak to Antonia your own self, and you will find, or I am very much mistaken, that she wishes for nothing better than to be your wife. These words were no sooner out of his mouth, than he called his

daughter, and left me with her for a few short minutes.

Not to trifle with so precious an opportunity, I broke me mind to her at once. Lovely Antonia, said I, it remains with you to fix the colour of me future days. Though I have your father's consent, do not think so meanly of me as to suppose that I would avail myself of it to violate the sacred freedom of your choice. Rapturous as must be the possession of your charins, I waive me pretensions if you but tell me that your duty and not your will complies. It would be affectation to put on such a repugnance, answered she: the honour of your addresses is too flattering to excite any other than agreeable sensations, and I am thankful for me father's tender care of me, instead of demurring to his will. I am not sure, whether such an acknowledgment may not be contrary to the rules of female reserve in the polite world, but if you were disagreeable to me, I should be plain-spoken enough to tell you so, why then should I not be equally free in owning the kind feelings of me heart?

At sounds like these, which I could not hear without being enraptured, I dropped on me knee before Antoina, and in the excess of me tender emotions, taking one of her fair hands, kissed it with an affectionate and impassioned action. My dear Antoina, said I, your frankness enchants me, go on, let noth-

ing induce you to depart from it you are conversing with your future husband, let your soul expand itself, and reveal all its inmost emotions in his presence. Thus then may I entertain the flattering hope, that you will not frown on the union of our destinies! The coming in of Basil at this moment prevented me from giving further vent to the delightful sensations which thrilled through me. Impatient to know how his daughter had behaved, and ready primed for scolding in case she had been perverse or coy, he made up to me immediately. Well now! said he, are you satisfied with Antoina? So much so, answered I, that I am going this very moment to set forward the preparations for our marriage. So saying, I left the father and daughter, for the purpose of taking counsel with my secretary there\* upon.

## CHAPTER IX

*Nuptials of Gil Blas with the fair Antonia the style and manner of the ceremony, the persons assisting thereat, and the festivities ensuing thereupon*

THOUGH there was no occasion to consult with the lords of Leyva about me marriage, yet both Scipio and myself were of opinion that I could not decently do otherwise than communicate to them me purpose of connecting myself with Basil's daughter, and just pay them the compliment of asking their advice, after the act was finally determined on.

I immediately went off for Valencia, where me visit was a matter of surprise, and still more the purport of it. Don Caesar and don Alphonso, who were acquainted with Antonia, having seen her more than once, wished me joy on me good fortune in a wife. Don Caesar, in particular, made his speech upon the occasion with so much youthful fire, that if there had not been reason to suppose his lordship weaned, by that icy moralist, time, from certain naughty propensities, I should have suspected him of going to Linas now and then, not so much to look after his concerns there, as after his little empress of the dairy. Sera-phina, too, with the kindest assurances of a lively

interest in whatever might befall me, said that she had heard a very favourable character of Antonia, but, added she with a malicious fling, as if to taunt me with my supercilious reception of Sephora's amorous advances, even though her beauty had not been so much the talk of the country, I could have depended on your taste, from former experience of its delicacy and fastidiousness.

Don CÆsar and his son did not stop at cold approbation of my marriage, but declared that they would defray all the expenses of it. Measure back your steps, said they, to Linas, and stay quietly there till you hear further from us. Make no preparation for your nuptials, for we shall make that our concern. To meet their kind intentions with becoming gratitude, I returned to my mansion, and acquainted Basil and his daughter with the projected kindness of our patrons. We determined to wait their pleasure with as much patience as falls to the lot of poor human nature under such circumstances. Eight long days dragged out their tedious measure, and brought no tidings of our bliss. But the rewards of self-control are not the less assured for being slow. On the ninth, a coach drawn by four mules drove up, with a cargo of mantua-makers for the bride, and an assortment of rich silks on which to exercise their art. Several livery servants, mounted on mules, accompanied the cavalcade. One of them brought me a letter from don Alphon-

so. That nobleman sent me word that he would fee at Linas next day with his father and his wife, and that the marriage cereinony should be performed on the day after that, by the vicar-general of Valencia. And just so it caine to pass don Ceesar, his son, and Seraphina, with that venerable dignitary, were punctual to their appointinent; all four of them in a coach and six; none of your mules, like the mantua-makers! pieceded by another coach and four, with Seraphina's woinen; and the rear was brought up by a company of the governor's guards

The governo s lady had hardly entered the house, before she testified an ardent longing to see Antonia, who on her part no sooner knew that Seraphina was arrived, than she ran forward to bid her welcome, with a respectful kiss upon her hand, so gracefully and modestly iinpressed, that all thecompany were enchanted at the action And now, madam! said don CÆsar to his daughter-in-law, what do you think of Antonia? Could Santillane have made a better choice No, answered Seraphina they are worthy each of the other there can be no doubt but their union will be most happy. In short, every one was lavish in the praise of me intended and if they felt her beains so powerfully under the eclipse of a **stuff** gown, what inust they not have endured form her brightness, in the ineridian sunshine of her wed ding finery' One would have fancied, she had been clothed in srks, jewels, and fine linen form her

cradle, by the dignity of her at and the ease of her deportment

The happy moment which was to unite two fond lovers in the bands of Hyinen being arrived, don Alphonso took me by the hand and led me to the altar, while Seraphina conferred the like honour on the bride elect. Our procession had marched fit and decent order through the hamlet to the chapel, where the vicar-getieral was waiting to go thiough the service, and the cereinony was perforined amidst the heartfelt congratulations of the inhabitants, and of all the wealthy farmers in the neighbourhood, whom Basil had invited to Antoina's wedding. Their daughters too came in their train, tricked out in ribbons and in flowers, and dancing to the music of their own tambourines. We returned to the mansion under the same escort, and there by the provident attentions of Scipio, who officiated as high steward and master of the ceremonies, we found three tables set out, one for the principals of the party, another for their household, and the third, which was by far the largest, for all invited guests proiniscuously. Antoina Was at the first, the governor's lady having made a point of it; I did the honours of the second, and Basil was placed at the head of that where the country people dined. As for Scipio, he never sat down, but was here there, and every where, fetching and carrying, changing plates and filling bumpers, urging the company to

call freely for what they wanted, and egging them on to mirth and jollity.

The entertainment had been prepared by the governor's cooks, and that is as much as to say, that there were all the delicacies imaginable, in season or out of season. The good wines land in for me by matter Joachim, were set running at a furious rate; the guests were beginning to feel their jovial influence, pleasantries and repartees gave a zest to conviviality, when on a sudden our harmony was interrupted by an alarming occurrence. My secretary, being in the hall where I was dining with don Alphonso's principal officers and Seraphina's women, suddenly fainted. I started up and ran to his assistance; and, while I was employed in bringing him about, one of the women was taken ill also. It was evident to the whole company that this sympathetic malady must involve some mysterious incident, as in effect it turned out almost immediately, that thereby hung a tale. For Scipio soon recovered, and said to me in a low voice. Why must one man's meat be another man's poison, and the most auspicious of your days, the curse of mine. But every man bears the bundle of his sins upon his back, and my pack-saddle is once more thrown across my shoulders in the person of my wife.

Powers of mercy! exclaimed I, this can never be! it is all a romance. What! you the husband of that lady whose nerves were so affected by the disturb

ance? Yes, sir, answered he, I am her husband; a wretched fortune, if you will take the word of a sinner, could not have done me a dirtier office than by conjuring up such a grievance as this I know not, methinks, replied I, what reasons you may have for thus belabouring your ribs with wordy buffets but however she may be to blame, in mercy keep a bridle on your tongue; if you have any regard for me, do not displace the mirth and spoil the pleasure of this nuptial meeting, by ominous disorder or enraged question of past injuries You shall have no reason to complain on that score, rejoined Scipio; but shall see presently whether I am not a very apt dissembler.

With this assurance, he went forward to his wife, whom her companions had also brought back to life and recollection, and, embracing her with as much apparent fervour as if his raptures had been real, Ah! my dear Beatrice, said he, heaven has at length united us again after ten years of cruel separation ! But this blissful moment is well purchased by whole ages of torturing suspense! I know not, answered his spouse, whether you really are at all the happier for having recovered a part of yourself, but of this at least I am fully certain, that you never had any reason to run away from me as you did. A fine story indeed! You found me one night with signor don Ferdinand de Leyva, who was in love with my mistress Julia, and consulted me on the

subject of his passion; and only for that, you must take it into your stupid head, that I was caballing with him against your honour and me own. there-upon that poor brain of yours was turned with jealousy ; you quitted Toledo in a huff, and ran away from you own flesh and blood as you would from a monster of the deserts, without leaving word why or wherefore Now which of us two, be so good as to tell me, has most reason to take on and be pettish I Your own dear self, beyond all question, replied Scpio. Beyond all question, re-echoed she, me own ill-used self Don Ferdinand, very shortly after you had taken yourself off from Toledo, married Julia, with whom I continued as long as she lived; and, after we had lost her by sudden death, I came into me lady her sister's service, who, as well as all her maids, and I would do as much for them, will give me a good character, honest and sober and a very termagant among the Impertinent fellows

My secretary, having nothing to allege against such a character from me lady and her maids, was determined to make the best of a bad bargain Once for all, said he to his spouse, I acknowledge me bad behaviour, and beg pardon for it before this honourable assembly. It was now time for me to act the mediator, and to move Beatrice for an act of amnesty, assuring her that her husband from this time forward would make it the great object of his life to play the husband to her satisfaction. She

began to see that there was reason in roasting of eggs, and all present were loud in their congratulations, on the triumph of suffering virtue, and the renovated pledge of broken vows To bind the contract firmer, and make it ineluctable, they were seated next to one another at table, their healths were drunk according to the laws of toasting; wish you joy! in any returns of this happy day' rang round on every side. one would have sworn that the dinner was given for their reconciliation) and not on account of my marriage.

The third table was the first to be cleared the young villagers joined up in a body • the lads took out their blooming partners, the tambourines struck up a merry beat, spectators flocked from the other tables, and caught the enlivening spirit from the gay bustle of the scene. Every limb and muscle of every individual was in motion: the household of the governor and his lady formed a set, apart from the rustics of the company, while their superiors did not disdain to mingle with the homelier dancers doña Alphonso danced a saraband with Seraphina, and don Cæsar another with Antonia, who afterwards took me for her partner She did not perform much amiss, considering^ that she never got much further than the five positions, in learning which she had her ankles kicked to pieces by a provincial dancing-master at Albarazin, while on a visit to a tradesman's wife, one of her relations. As for

me, who, as I have already said, had taken lessons at the marchioness de Chaves's, I figured away as the principal Man *in* this rural ballet. With regard to Beatrice and Scipto, they preferred a little private conversation to dancing, that they might compare notes on the subject of wear and tear during the painful period of separation \* but their billing and cooing was interrupted by Seraphina, who, having been informed of this dramatic discovery, sent for them to pay the customary compliments of congratulation. My good people, said she, on this day of general joy, but gives me additional pleasure to see you two restored to one another. My friend Scipto, I return you your wife under a firm belief that she has always conducted herself as became woman; take up your abode with her here, and be a good husband to her. And you, Beatrice, attach your self to Antonia and let her be as much the object of your devoted service, as signor de Santdlane is that of your husband. Scipio, who could not possibly, after this, think of Penelope as he to hold a candle to his own wife, promised to treat her with all the deference due to such a paragon of conjugal fidelity.

The country people, having kept up the dance till late, withdrew to their own homes; but the rejoicings were prolonged by the company in the house. There was a grand supper; and, at bed-time, the vicar general pronounced the blessing of consummation.

Seraphna undressed the bride, and the lards of Leyva did me the same honour. The ridiculous part of the business was, that don Alphonso's officers and his lady's attendants took it into their heads, by way of diverting themselves, to perform the saine ceremony: they also undressed Beatrice and Sapio, who, to render the scene suprenaely farcical, gravely allowed themselves to be untrussed, and put ia bed with all nuptial pomp and state.

## CHAPTER X

*The home-inoan, (q, very dull tiine for the render us a third person) enlivened by the cominenceinent of Seprows story*

1 is beaven lUelf, 'Us ecstasy of bluss,  
 Uininterrupted joy untired excess ,  
 Mirth following mirth the moments dance away;  
 Love clams the night, and friendship rules the day.

Oy the day after the wedding, the lords of Leyva returned to Valencia, after having lavished on me a thousand marks of friendship. There was such a general clerance, that my secretary and myself, with our resective wives, and our usual establish -

ment, were left in undisturbed possession of our owe home.

The efforts which we both made -to please our ladies were not thrown away I breathed by degrees into the partner of me joys and sorrows as much love for me as I entertained for her, and Scipio made his better part forget the woes and privations he had occasioned her Beatrice, who had very winning ways with her, and was all things to all women, had no difficulty about worming herself into the good graces of her new mistress, and gaining her complete -confidence In short, we all four agreed admirably well together, and began to enjoy a bliss above the common lot of humanity Every day rolled along more delightfully than the last Antoina was pensive and demure, but Beatrice and myself were enlisted in the crew of mirth, and even though we had been constitutionally sedate, Scipio was among us, and he was of himself a pril to purge melancholy The best creature in the world for a snug little party one of those merry drolls who have only to shew their comical faces, and set the table in a roar of inextinguishable laughter.

One day when we had taken a fancy to go after dinner, and doze away the usual interval in the most sequestered spot about the grounds, me secretary got into such exuberant spirits, as to chace away the drowsy god by his exhilarating sallies Do hold your tongue, me loquacious friend, said I. or frind

if you are determined to wage war against this lazy custom of our afternoons, at least tell us something which we shall be the wiser for hearing. With all my heart and soul, sir, answered he. Would you have me go through all the fabulous histories of wandering knights, distressed damsels, giants, enchanted castles, and the whole train of legendary adventures I had much rather hear your own true history, replied I; but that is a pleasure which you have not thought fit to give me so long as we have lived together, and I seem likely to go without it to the end of the chapter. How happens that said he. If I have not told you my own story, it is because you never expressed the slightest wish to be troubled with the recital therefore it is not my fault if you are in the dark about my past life, but, if you are really at all curious to be let into the secret, my loquacity is very much at your service on the occasion. Antonia, Beatrice, and myself unanimously took him at his word, and arranged ourselves for listening like an attentive audience. The speculation was a safe one on our parts; for the tale was sure to answer, either as a stimulant, or a soporific.

I certainly ought to have been descended, said Scipio, from some family of the highest rank and earliest antiquity; or in default of such parentage, from the most distinguished orders of personal merit, such as that of St James or Alcantara, if a man may be permitted to decide on the fittest circum-

staaces for his own birth hut as it is not among the privileges of human nature to elect one's own father you are to know that mine, by name Tornbio Scipio, was a subaltern my rmidon of the Holy Brotherhood As he was going back and fore on the king's highway, and looking after business in his own line, be met once on a time, between Cuenca and Toledo with a young Boheman babe of chance, who appealed very pretty in his eyes. She was alone, on foot, and carned her whole patriinony at her back in a kind of knapsack Whither are you going, me little darling said he in a philandering tone of voice, unlike the natural hoarseness of his accents. Good worthy gentleinan, answered she, I am going to Toledo, where I hope to gain an honest livelihood by hook or by crook. Your intentions are highly cominendable retorted he, and I doubt not but you have many a hook and many a crook among the Implements of your trade Yes, with a blessing on me endeavours, rejoined she I have several little ways of doing for myself: I know how to make washes and creams for the ladies' faces, perfumes for their noses and their chambers; then I can tell fortunes, can search for things lost with a sieve and sheers, and erect figures for the taking in of shadows with a glass

Torribto, concluding that so well provided a girl would be a very advantageous match fora man like himself who could scarcely scrape wherewithal to

support life by his own profession, though he was as good a thief-taker as the best of them, made her an offer of marriage, and she was nothing loth, nor prudishly coy. They flew on the wings of inclination and convenience to Toledo, where they weie joined together; and you behold in me the happy pledge of holy and lawful matriinony. They fixed themselves in a shop on the outskirts of the town, where me mother cominenced her careei by selling the said washes, creams, tapes, laces, silk, thread, toys, and pedlar's ware • but trade not being brisk enough to live coinfortably by it, she turned fortune-teller. This drew her custoiners, got her countenance, credit, crowns, and pistoles, a thousand dupes of either sex soon trumpeted up the reputation of Cosclina, for so me gipsy inainina had the honour to be named. Some one or other came every day to bargain for the exercise of her skill in the black art at one time a nephew at his wit's and puree's end, wanting to know how soon his uncle was to set off post for the other world, and leave behind him wherewithal to piece his worn-out fortunes at another, some yielding, love-stck girl, to enquire whether the swain who kept her company and had proimised to marry her, would keep his word or be false-hearted YouwiH take notice if you please that I always sold good-kick for good money, if the accomplisiment trod on the beels of the prediction, well

and good, if it was fulfilled according to the rule of contraries, she was always cool though the parties were ever so violently in a passion, and told them plainly that it was her familiar's fault, not hers, for though she paid him the highest wages, and bound him by potent spells to stir up the cauldron of futurity from the bottom, like earthly cooks, he would some times be careless or out of humour, and appportion the ingredients wrongly.

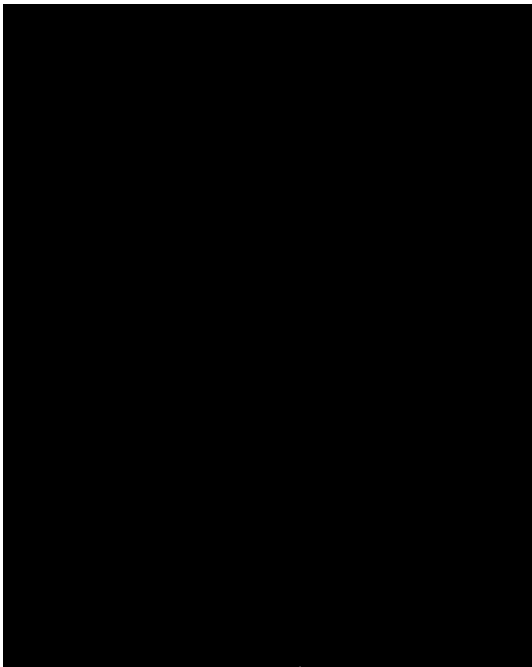
When me mother thought the conjuncture momentous enough, to laise the devil without cheapening him in the eyes of the vulgar, Tornbio Scipio enacted his infernal inajesty, and played the part just as if he had been born to it, huinouring the hideous features of the character by a very small aggravation of his own natural face, and practising the pandeionian note of elocution in the lower octave of his voice A person in *the* slightest degree superstitious would be scared out of his senses at me father's figure But one day, as his satanic prototype would have it, there came a savage rascal of a captain, who asked to see the devil, for no earthly purpose but to run him clean through the body The inquisition, having received notice of the devil's death, sent to take charge of his widow, and administer to his effects, as for poor little me, just seven years old at the time, I was sent to the foundling hospital. There were some charitable ecclesiastics on that establishinent, who, being liberally

paid for the education of the poor orphans, were so zealous in their office as to teach them reading and writing. They fancied there was something particularly promising about me, which made them pick me out from all the rest, and send me on their errands, I was letter-carrier, messenger, and chapel clerk. As a token of their gratitude, they undertook to teach me Latin, but their mode of tuition was so harsh, and then discipline so severe, though I was a sort of pet with them, that, not being able to stand it any longer, I ran away one morning while out on an errand, and, so far from returning to the hospital, got out of Toledo through the suburbs on the Seville side.

Though I had not then completed my ninth year, I already felt the pleasure of being free, and master of my own actions. I was without money and without food, no matter! I had no lessons to say by heart, no themes to hammer out. After having pushed on for two hours, my little legs began to refuse their office. I had never before made so long a trip. It became necessary to stop and take some rest. I sat myself down at the foot of a tree close by the highway, there, by way of amusement, I took my grammar out of my pocket, and began conning it over by way of a joke. But at length, coming to recollect the raps on the knuckles, and the castigations on the more classical seat of punishment which it had cost me, I tore it leaf by leaf, with an apos-

tophe of angry import Ah! you odrous thing of a book! you shall never make me shed tears any more White I was assuaging my vindictive spmt, by strewing the ground about me with declensohs and conjugations, there passed that way a hermit with a white beard, with a large par of spectacles on his nose, and altogether an Outside of much sanctity He came up to me, and, if I was an object of speculation to him, he was no less so to me My little man, said he with a smile, it should seem as if we had both taken a sudden liking to each other, and m that case we cannot do better than to live together in my hermitage, which is not two hundred yards distant You most obedient for that, answered I pertly enough, I have not the least desire to turn hermit At this answer, the good old man set up a roar of laughter, and said with a kind embrace You must not be frightened at my dress; if it is not becoming, it is useful; it gives me my titie to a charming retreat, and to the good-will of the neighboring villages, whose inhabitants love or rather idolize me Come this way, andi I will clothe you m a jacket of the same stuff as mine If you think well of it, you shall share with me the pleasures of the life I lead, and, if it does not hit your fancy, you shall not only be at liberty to leave me, but you may depend on it that in the event of our parting, I shall not fail to do something handsome by you\*

I suffered myself to be pei suaded, and followed





the old hermit, who put several questions to me, which I answered With a truth-telling siinplicity, not always to be found in a more advanced stage of me morality Oh our arrival at the hermitage, he set some fruit before me, which *I* devoured, having eaten nothing all day but a slice of dry bread, on which I had breakfasted at the hospital in the morning The recluse, seeing me play so good a part with me jaws, said Courage, me good boy, do not spae me fruit, there is plenty of it, heaven be praised I have not brought you hither to staIve ou And indeed that was true enough, for an houi afteri our coining in, he kindled a fire, put a leg of mut'on down to roast, and while I turned the spit, laid a small table for himself and me, with a very dirty napkin upon it

When the meat was done enough, he took it up, and out some slices for our slipper, Which was no dry bargain, since we quaffed a delicious wine of which he had laid in ainple store Well' me chicken, said he as we rose from table, are you satisfied with me style of living You see how we shall fare every day, if you *fix* your quarters here Then with respect to liberty, you shall do just as you please in this hermitage All I require of you is to accompany me, whenever I go begging to the neighbounng villages, you Will be of use in driving an ass laden with two pannters, which the charitable peasants usually fill with eggs, bread, meat, and fish I ask

no more than that I will do, said I, whatever you desire, provided you will not oblige me to learn Latin. Friar Chrysostom, for that was the old hermit's name, could not help smiling at me school-boy frowardness, and assured me once more that he should not pretend to interfere either with my studies or me inclinations.

On the very next day we went on a foraging party with the donkey, which I led by the halter. We made a profitable gleanings, for all the farmers took a pleasure in throwing some what into our panniers. One chucked in an uncut loaf, another a large piece of bacon, here a goose, there a pair of giblets, and a partridge to crown the whole. But without entering farther into particulars, we carried home provender enough for a week, and hence you may infer the esteem and friendship in which the country people held the holy man. It is true that he was a great blessing to the neighbourhood. His advice was always at their service when they came to consult him. He restored peace where discord had reigned in families, and made up matches for the daughters. He had a nostrum for almost any disease you could mention, with an assortment of pious rituals, to avert the curse of barrenness.

Hence you perceive that I was in no danger of starving in my hermitage. My lodging too was none of the worst. Stretched on good fresh straw with a cushion of ratten under my head, and a

coverlet over me of the same stuff I made but one nap of it all night Biother Chrysostom, who had promised me a hermit's dress, made up an old gown of his own for me, and called me little brother Scipio No sooner did I appear in me religious uniform, than the ass's back suffered for me genteel appearance in the eyes of the villagers It was, who should give most to the little brother so much were they delighted with his spruce figure

The easy, slothful life I led with the old hermit, could not be very revoking to a boy of me age On the contrary, it suited me taste so exactly, that I should have continued it to this time, but that the fates and destinies were weaving a more complicated tissue for me future years It was cast in the figure of me nativity, early to louse myself form the effe-inacy of a religious life, and to take leave of brother Chrysostoin after the following manner,

I often observed the old man at work upon his pillow, unsewing and sewing it up again, and one day, I saw him put in some money This chcum-stance excited a tingling curiosity, which I proimised myself to satisfy the first time he went to Toledo, as he generally did once a week I waited impatiently for the day, but as yet, without any other motive than the mere desire of prying At last the good man went his way, and I unpicked his pillow, where I found, among the stuffing, the amount of about fifty crowns in all soits of coin.

This treasure must have accumulated from the gratitude of the peasantry, whom the hermit had cured by his nostrums, and of their wives, who had become pregnant by virtue of his spiritual interference. But however it got there, I no sooner set my eyes on money, which might be mine without any one near me to say nay, than the gipsy voice of nature and pedigree spoke within me. An extinguishable itch of pilfering tingled in my veins, and proved that we come into the world with the mark of our descent, and with our characters about us. I yielded to the temptation without a struggle, tied up my booty in a canvas bag where we kept our combs and night-caps then, having laid aside the hermit's, and resumed my foundling's dress, got clear off from the hermitage, and hugged my bag as though it had contained the boundless treasure of the Indies.

You have heard my first exploit, continued Scipio, and I doubt not but you will expect a succession of similar practices. Your anticipations will not be disappointed, for there are many such evidences of genius behind, before I come to those of my actions which prove me good as well as clever, but I shall come to them, and you will be convinced by the sequel, that a scoundrel born may be licked into virtue, as the cub of a bear into shape.

Child as I was, I knew better than to take the Toledo road, it would have been exposing myself to

the hard of meeting finar Chrysostom, who would have balanced accounts with me on a very thnftles principle I therefore travelled in another direction leading to the village of Galves, where I stopped at an inn, kept by a landlady who was a widow of forty, and hung out the bunch of grapes to a very good purpose This good woman no sooner kenned me, than, judging by me dress that I must be a truant form the orphan school, she asked who I was and whither I was going I answered that having lost me father and mother, I was looking for a place Can you read, me dear said she I assuied her that I could read, and write too, with the best of them In point of fact I could just form me letters, and john them so as to look a little like writing, and that was clerkship enough for a village pothouse Then I will take ycu into me service, replied the hostess You may earn your board easily enough, by scoring up the customers, and keeping my ledger I shall give you no woges, because this inn is frequented by very gentee lcompany, who never forget the waiters You may reckon upon very considerable perquisites

I clenched the bargain, reserving to myself, as you may suppose, the right of einigration whenever me abode at Galves should cease to be pleasant No sooner was I settled in me place, than a weight lay heavy on me mind I did not wish it to be known that I had money, and it was no easy matter

to devise where it could be hidden, so as that what **was** sauce for the goose should not be sauce for the gander. I was not yet well enough acquainted with the house to trust the places obviously most proper for such a deposit. What a source of embarrassment is great wealth ! I determined however on a corner of our granary under some straw, and believing it to be safer there than any where else, made myself as easy about it as I well could.

The household consisted of three servants. a lubberly ostler, a young Galician chainbermad, and myself, Each of us spunged what we could upon travellers, whether on foot or on horseback, I always came in for some small change, when the bill was paid. Then the equestrians gave something to the ostler, for taking care of their beasts; but as for our female fellow-servant, the muleteers who passed that way chucked her under the chin, and gave her more crowns than we got farthings. I had no sooner realized a penny, than away it went to the granary. and slept with its precursors; so that the higher rose me heap, the more greedy did my little heart become. Some times would I kiss the hallowed images of me idolatry, and look at them with a devotional glow, which few worshippers feel, but those whose religion is their gold.

This mordinate passion sent me back and fore to gratify it, at least thirty times a day. I often met the landlady on the staircase. She, being naturally

of a suspicious temper, had a mind to find out one day what could carry me every minute to the corn-loft. She therefore went up and began rummaging about every where, supposing perhaps that it was me receptacle for articles purloined in the house. Of course she did not forget to pull the straw about; and behold, there was me b a g T w o hands in a dish and one in a purse, was not one of her proverbs, so that finding the contents in crowns and pistoles, she thought, or seemed to think, that the money was lawfully and honestly hers. At least she had possession, and that is nine points of the law, though scarcely one of 'honesty'. But to do the thing decently, after calling me little wretch, little rascal, and so forth, she ordered the ostler, a fellow without any will but hers, to give me a hearty flogging, and then turned me out of doors, with this salt eel for me breakfast, and a lady-like oath that *no light-fingered gentry* should ever darken her doors. In vain did I protest and vow that I had never wronged me mistress • she affirmed the direct contrary, and her word would go further than mine at any time. Thus were friar Chrysostom's savings transferred from one thief, to a greater thief in the thief-taker.

I wept over the loss of me money, as a father over the death of his only son; and though me tears could not bring back what I had lost, they at least answered the purpose of exciting pity in some peoK

ple, who saw how bitterly they flowed, and among others in the parson who was accidentally going by. He seemed affected by my sad plight, and took me home with him. There, to gain me confidence, or rather to pump me, he began soothing my sorrows. How much this poor child is to be pitied ' said he. Is it any wonder if, thrown upon the wide world at so tender an age, he has committed a bad action ' Grown up men are not always proof against the flesh or the devil. Then, addressing me, Child, added he, from what part of Spain do you come, and who are your parents ? You have the look of family about you. Open your heart to me confidentially, and depend upon it, I never will desert you.

His reverence, by this kind and insinuating language, engaged me by degrees to tell him all my history, without falstication or leservice. I owned every thing, and thus he moralized on the leading article of my confession. My little friend, though hermits ought to lay up such treasures, as neither force nor fraud can wrest from them, that was no excuse for your taking the measure of punishment into your own hands by robbing brother Chrysostoin, you nevertheless sinned against that article of the decalogue, which tells you not to steal; but I will engage to make the hostess return the money, and will punctually remit it to the reverend friar at his hermitage you may therefore make your conscience perfectly easy on that score. Now, between

ourselves, me conscience was perfectly callous to every thing like compunction with respect to the cume in question The parson, who had his own ends to answer, had not done with me yet My lad, pursued he, I mean to take you by the hand, and find a good birth for you I shall send you to-morrow morning, by the carner, to me nephew, a canon of Toledo He will not refuse, at me request, to admit you upon his establishment, where they live like so many sons of the church, rosily, merrily, and fatly upon the rents of his prebendal stall you will be perfectly comfortable there, take me word for it

Patronage like this gave me so much encouragement, that I did not throw away another thought either upon me bag or me whipping My mind was wholly occupied with the idea of living rosily, merrily, and fatly, like a son of the church The following day, at breakfast time, there came, according to orders, a inuleteer to the parsonage with two mules saddled and bridled They helped me to mount one, the muleteer flung his leg over the other, and we trotted on for Toledo My fellow-traveller was a good pleasant companon, and desued nothing better than to indulge his humour at the expense of his neighbour My little volunteer, said he, you have a good friend in his leverence, the minister of Galves He could not give you a better proof of his kindness, than by placing you with his nephew

the canon, whom I have the honour of knowing, far beyond all question or comparison, to be the cock of the chapter, and a heaity one he is. None of your lantern-jawed saints, with Lent in his face, a cat-of-nine-tails on his back, and a cholera morbus in his belly. 'No such thing.' Our doctor is rubicund in the jowl, efflorescent on the nose, with a wicked eye at a bumper or a girl, militant against no earthly pleasure, but most addicted to the good things of the table. You will be as snug there as a bug in a blanket.

This hangman of a muleteer, perceiving with what exquisite satisfaction I took in all this, went on tantalizing me with the joys of an ecclesiastical life. He never dropped the subject till we got to the village of Obisa, and stopped there to refresh our mules. Then, while bustling about the inn, he accidentally dropped a paper from his pocket, which I was cunning enough to pick up without his seeing me, and took an opportunity of reading while he was in the stable. It was a letter addressed to the governors and superintendants of the orphan school, conceived in these terms: "Gentlemen, I consider it as an act at once of charity and of duty, to send you back a little truant, he seems a shrewd lad enough, and may do very well with good looking after. By dint of hard and frequent chastisement, I doubt not but you will ultimately bring him to a sense of his own unworthiness and your benevolence.

May a blessing be vouchsafed on your pious and charitable labours, for the early extirpation of sin and wickedness  
(Signed)

" THE MINISTER OF GALVES."

When I had finished leading this pleasant letter, which let me into the good intentions of his reverence the rector, it required little deliberation to determine what I was to do from the Inn to the banks of the Tagus, a space of three good miles, was but a hop, step, and jump. Fear lent me wings to escape from the governors of the foundling hospital, whither I was absolutely resolved never to return, having formed principles of taste diametrically opposite to their method of teaching the classics. I went into Toledo with as light a heart, as if I had known where to get me daily bread. To be sure, it is a town of ways and means, where a man who can live by his wits need never die of hunger. Scarcely had I reached the high street, when a well-dressed gentleman by whom I brushed, caught me by the arm, saying, My little fellow, do you want a place? You are just such a smart lad as I was looking for. And you are just the master for me money, answered I. Since that is the case, rejoined he, you are mine from this moment, and have only to follow me, which I did without asking any more questions.

This spark, about the age of thirty, and bearing

the name of don Abel, lodged in very handsome leady furnished apaitments He was by profession a blacklegs, and the following was the nature of our engagement In the morning I got him as much tobacco as would smoke five of six pipes, blushed his clothes, and lan for a barber to shave him and trum his whiskers, after which he made the circle of the tenms-couits, whence he never returned home till eleven or twelve at night But every morning, at going out, he gave me three reals for the expenses of the day, leaving me master of me own time till ten "o" 'clock in the evening, and provided I was within doors by his return, all was well He gave me a hvery besides, in which I looked hke a little lac key of illicit love I took very kindly to me condition, and certainly could not have met with any more congenial with me temper

Such and so happy had been me way of life for nearly a month, when me employer enquired whether I liked his service, and on me answer in the affirmative, Well then' resumed he, to-morrow we shall set out for Seville, whither me concerns call me You will not be sorry to see the capial of Andalusia " He that hath not Seville seen," says the proverb, " Is no traveller, I ween " I engaged at once to follow him all over the world On that very day, the Seville earner fetched away a large trunk with me master's wardiobe, and on the next morning, we were on the road for Andalusia

Siignor don Abel was so lucky at play, that he never lost but when it was convenient, but then it was seldom convenient to stay long in a place, because those who are always losers find out at last, that though chance is a dangerous antagonist, certainly it is a desperate one, and that accounted for our journey On our arrival at Seville, we took lodgings near the Cordova gate, and resumed the same mode of life as at Toledo But we mastered found some difference between the two towns The Seville tennis-courts could produce players equally in fortune's good graces with himself, so that he some times came home a good deal out of humour One morning, when he was biting the bridle for the loss of a hundred pistoles the day before, he asked why I had not carried his men to the laundress I pleaded forgetfulness Thereupon, flying into a passion, he gave me half-a-dozen boxes on the ear in such a style, as to kindle an illumination in my blinking eyes, to which the glories of Solomon's temple were no more to be compared, than the torches in a Candlemas procession to a rush-light There is for you, you little scoundrel' said he take that, and learn to mind your business Must I be eternally at your heels to remind you of what you are to do Are your brains in your belly, and all your wits in your grinders You are not a downright idiot' Then why not prevent me wants and anticipate my orders After this experimental lec-

ture, he went out for the day, leaving me in high dudgeon, at a repriinand so much in the manner of •me friend the ostler, for such a tnfle as not getting up his things for the wash

I could never learn what happened to him a short time after at a tennis-court, but one evening he came home in a terrible heat Scipio, said he, I am bent on going to Italy, and must embark the day after to-morrow on board a vessel bound for Genoa. I have me reasons for making this little excursion, of course you will be glad to attend me, and to profit by so fine an opportunity of seeing the loveliest countiy on the face of the earth My tongue gave Consent, but with a salvo in me heart and a bargain With me revenge, to give him the slip just at the moment of einbarkation This was so delightful a scheme, that I could not help iinparting it to a bully by profession, whom I met in the street During me abode in Seville, I had picked up some awkward acquaintance, and this was one of the most ungainly I told him how and why me ears had been boxed, and then communicated me pioject of running away from don Abel just before the ship was to sail, begging to know what he thought of the plan

My bluff adviser puckered his eyebrows while he listened, and fiddled with his fingers about his whiskers , then, blaming me master very seriously, My little hero, said he, you are eternally disgraced, can never shew your face again, if you sit down

quietly with so paltry a satisfaction as what you propose To let don Abel go off by himself, would be a poor revenge for wrongs like yours, the punishment should be proportioned to his crime Let us fne him to the full amount of his purse and effects, which we will share like brothers after he is gone Now it is to be noted, that though thieving fell in very naturally with the bent of me genius, the proposal rather startled me, as the lobbyery was upon a large scale for so young an apprentice

And yet the arch deceiver of me innocence found the means of woiking me up to the perpetration, so that the result of our enterpuse was as follows This glorious ruffian, a tall, brawny fellow, came in the evening about twilight to our lodging I shewed him me inaster's travelling trunk ready packed, and asked him whether he could carry so heavy a load upon his shoulders, So heavy as that' said he shew me where a transfer of property is to be made in me favour, and I could run with Noah's ark to the top of mount Ararat To prove his woids, he telt the trunk, flung it carelessly over his back, and scainpered down stairs. I followed nmbly, and we had just got to the street door, when don Abel, brought home in the nick of time by the ascendancy of his lucky stars, stood like an apparition, to appal our guilty souls

Whither are you going with that trunk said he. I was so taken by surprise, that me assurance failed

me, and broad-shoulders, finding that he had drawn a blank in the lottery, threw down his booty, and took to his heels, rather than be troubled for an explanation. Once more, whither are you going with that trunk? said me master Sir, answered I, with all the honest simplicity of a criminal, pleading in arrest of judgment, I was going to put it on board the vessel, that we might have the less to do to-morrow, before we embark ourselves. Indeed? Then you know, retorted he, in what ship I have taken me passage? No, sir, replied I, but those who can talk Latin may always find their way to Rome. I should have enquired at the point, and somebody would have informed me. At this explanation, which left his opinion where it found it, he darted a frowning glance at me. I thought for a while, he was going to cuff me again about the head. Who ordered you, cried he, to take me trunk out of this house? You, your own self, said I. Can you possibly have forgotten how you rated me but a few days ago? Did not you tell me, with a flea in me ear, that you would have me prevent your wants, and do beforehand from me own head whatever your service might require? Now, not to be thrashed a second time for want of forethought, I was seeing you trunk safe and soon enough on board. On this the gamester, finding that I had cut me teeth of wisdom sooner than suited his purpose, turned me off very coolly, saying Go about your business,

master Scipio, and speed as you may deserve I do not like to play with folks who are In the habit of l evoking Get out of me sight, or I shall set your *solfeggio* in a crying key

I spared him the trouble of telling me to go twice Off I shot like an anow, for fear he should unfledge me, by taking away me livery When distant enough to slacken me pace, I walked along the streets, musing whither I might betake myself for a night's lodging, with only two reals in me pocket The gate of the archbishop's palace at length stared me in the face, and, as his grace's supper was then dressing, a savoury odour exhaled form the kitchens, impregnating the gale with soup and sauce for a mile round Ods haricots and cutlets ' thought I, it would be no hard matter for me to dispense with one of those little side dishes, which will be of no use to the archbishop but to make out the figure of his table nay, I would be contented only just to dip in me four fingers and thumb, and then to sup like a bear upon suckings But how to accomplish it' Is there no way of bringing these choice moisels to a better test than that of 'smell' And why not<sup>?</sup> Hungei, they say, will break thiohgh stone walls On this idea, did I set me wits to work, and, by dint of conning over the subject, a stratagem struck me, which set me lungs as well as appetite in motion, just as the old c found it," like a madman, when he had hit the right

nail of his proposition on the head, I ram into the court of the palace, and made the best of me way to the kitchens, calling out with all me might, " Help' help" as if some assassin had been at me heels

At me reiterated ones, master Diego, the archbishop's cook, ran with three or four kitchen drudges to learn what was the matter, and seeing only me, asked why I roared so loud. Ah! good sir, answered I, with every token of exquisite distress, For mercy's sake and for St. Polycarp's! save me, I beseech you, form the fury of a blusterer, who swears he will kill me But where is this disturber of the public peace' cred Diego. You have no one to quarrel with but yourself, for I do not see so much as a cat to spit at you Go your ways, me little man, and do not be afraid; it is evidently some wag who has been playing upon your cowardice for his diversion, but he knew better than to follow you within these walls, for we would have cut his ears off at the least No, no, said I, it was for no laughing matter that he ran after me He is a noted footpad, and meant to rob me; I am certain that he is now waiting for me at the corner of the street. Then he may wait long enough, replied the knight of the iron spit; for you shall stay here till to-morrow. You shall sup with us, and we will give you a bed.

I was out of me little wits with joy at the mention of the **last** tidings; and it **was** like the turnpike

road to paradise after crossing an Arabian desert, when being fed by master Diego through the kitchens, I there saw me lord archbishop's supper, and the stew-pans in the last throes of parturition. There were fifteen accountable souls, for I reckoned them up, in attendance on the labour; but the litter of dishes far out-numbered the fecundity of nature in her most prolific mood: so much more gracious and bountiful is providence to the heads of the church in the indulgence of their appetites, than mindful of the worthless brute creation in the propagation of its kind. Here it was, at the fountain head of prelacy, inhaling an atmosphere of gravy, instead of just snuffing the scent as it lay upon the breeze, that I first shook hands with sensuality. I had the honour of supping with the scullions, and of sleeping in their room; an initiation of friendship so sincere and strong, that on the following day, when I went to thank master Diego for his goodness in vouchsafing me a refuge, he said: Our kitchen lads have been with me in a body, to declare how excessively delighted they are with your inners, and to propose having you among them as a fellow-servant. How should you, on your part like to make one of the society? I answered that with such a feather in my cap, I should be the vamest and the happiest of mortals. Then so be it, my friend, replied he; consider yourself henceforth as a buttress of the hierarchy. With this invitation, he introduced me to the

major-domo, who thought he saw talent enough if me for a turnspit

No sooner was I in possession of so honourable an office, than master Diego, following the practice of cooks in great houses, who painper up their pretty dears in private with all sorts of good things, select edrme to supply a lady in the neighbourhood with a regular table of butcher's meat, poultry, and game This good friend of his was a widow on the right side of thirty, very pretty, very lively, and to all appearance contenting herself with cup-board love for her cook His generous passion was not confined to furnishing her with bread, meat, and garnish, she drank her wine too; and the archbishop was her wine-merchant

The iinprovement of me parts kept pace with that of me carnal condition in his grace's palace; where I gave a specimen of rising genius, still ringing on the trump of fame at Seville The pages and some others of the household had a mind to get up a play on me lord archbishop's birthday They chose a popular Spanish tragedy; and wanting a boy about me age to personate the young king of Leon, cast me for the part. The major-domo, a great spouter, undertook to train me for the stage; and after a few lessons, pronounced that I should not be the worst actor of the company. His grace not wishing to starve so handsome a compliment to himself, no expense was spared in getting it up magnificently.

The largest hall in the palace was fitted up as a theatre, with appropriate decorations. At the side scene there was a bed of turf, on which I was to be discovered asleep, when the Moors were to rush in and take me prisoner. When we had got so far with our rehearsals, as to be sure of being ready by the time fixed, the archbishop sent out cards of invitation to ail the principal families in the city.

At length, the great, the important day arrived, and each performer was big with the contrivance and adjustment of his dress. Mine was brought by a tailor, accompanied by our major-doino, who, after taking the trouble of drilling me at rehearsal, wished to see justice done to me outward appearance. The tailor put me on a rich robe of blue velvet, with hanging sleeves, gold lace, fringe, and buttons; the major-doino himself crowned me with a pasteboard crown, studded with false diamonds and real pearls. Moreover, they gave me a sash of pink silk worked in silver; so that every new ornament was like a quill-feather in the wing of a bird. At last, about dusk, the play began. The curtain drew up for me soliloquy, the purport of which was to express, in a round-about, poetical way,\* that not being able to defend myself from the influence of sleep, I was going to lie down and take it as it came. To suit the action to the word, I sidled off to the corner between the flat and the wings, and squatted down on the bed of turf; but, instead of going to sleep, accord-

ing to promise, I was hammenng upon the means of getting into the street, and lunning away with me coronation finery A little private stancase, leading under the theatre into the lower saloon, seemed to furnish the probability of success I slid away shly, while the audience were considering some necessary question of the play, and ran down the staircase, through the saloon, to the door, calling out, " Make way make way' I must change me dress, and run up again in a moment!" They all made a lane, for fear of hindering me, so that in less than two minutes I got cleai out of the palace, under cover of the darkness, and scainpered to-the house of me friend who saw gentlemen's trunks safe on board

He stared like a stuck pig at me equipment But when I let him into the why and the wherefore, he laughed ready to split his sides. Then, shaking hands in the sincerity of his heart, because he flattered himself with the hope of a pension on the king of Leon's civil list, he wished me joy of so successful a. first appearance, and joued issue with the major-doino in the prognostic, that with encouragement and practice I should turn out a first-rate actor, and make no little noise in the world. After we had diverted ourselves for some time at the expense of me manager and audience, I said to the bully: What shall we do with this magnificent dress? Do not make yourself uneasy about that, answered he. I know an honest broker, without an

atom of eunosity in his composition, who will buy or sell any thing with any person, provided that he gets the turn of the market upon the transaction I will fetch him to you to-morrow-morning The knowing fellow was as good as his word, for he went out early the next day, leaving me in bed, and returned two hours afterwards with the broker, carrying a yellow bundle under his arm My friend, said he, give me leave to introduce signor Ybagnez of Segovia, who, in spite of the bad example set him by the trade in general, trusts to fan dealing and small profits for a moderate pittance and an unbleinished character He will tell you to a fraction what the dress you want to part with is really worth, and you may take his calculation as the balance of justice, between man and man Oh yes ' to a nicety, said the broker Else wherefore live I in a christian land but to appraise for me neighbour as for myself' To take a mean advantage never was, thank heaven and at these years never shall be iinputed to Ybagnez of Segovia Let us look a little at those articles ' You are the seller; I am the buyer J We have only to agree upon an equitable price Here they are, said the bully, pulling them out. now own the truth; was there ever any thing more magnificent ? You do not often see such velvet; and then the trmming! You cannot say too much of it, answered the salesman, examining the suit with the prying eye of a dealer it is of the very first quality And

what think you of the pearls upon this crown resumed me friend. A little rounder, observed Ybagnez, and there would be no setting a price upon them! however, take them as they are, it is a very fine set, and I do not want to find fault about trifles. Now your common run of appraisers, under me circumstances, would affect to disparage the goods for the sake of getting them cheaper; one of those fellows would have the conscience to offer twenty pistoles, but there is nothing like bargaining with an upright, downright man! I will give forty at a word, take them or leave them •

Had Ybagnez ventured up to a hundred, he would not have burned his fingers, for the pearls alone would have fetched two hundred any where The bully, who went snacks, then said Now only look' what a mercy it is, to fall into the hands of a man, not of this world Signor Ybagnez esteimates money as dross, in comparison of his principles and his soul. He may die to-night, and yet not be taken unprepared That is too much You make me blush, said the salesinan of principle and soul, but so far is true, that me price is always fixed. Well, now, is it a bargain The money down upon the nal too ' Stop a moment! answered the bully; me little friend must first try on the clothes you have brought for him by me order I am very much mistaken if they will not just fit him. The salesman then, untying his bundle, shewed me a second hand suit of dark

cloth with silver buttons. I got up, and got into it, too big for me every way' but these gentlemen could have sworn, it had been made to me measure Ybagnez put it at ten pistoles, and as he was an upright, downright man, of fixed principle and soul, estimating money as dross in comparson of integrity, his first price was of course his last He therefore took out his purse, and counted down thirty pistoles upon a table, after which he packed up the king of Leon's regalia, and went his way

When he was gone, the bully said I am very well satisfied with that broker And so he well might be<sup>1</sup> for I am certam, he must have received at least a hundred pistoles, as hush-money But there was no reason why the broker's benevolence should pay the debts of me gratitude so he took half the money on the table, without saying with your leave or by your leave, and suffered me to packet the remander with the following advice My dear Scipio, with that balance of fifteen pistoles, I would have you get out of this town as fast as you can, for you may suppose that me lord archbishop will ferret you out, if you are above ground. It would grieve me to the heart if, after having risen so superior to the prejudice of honesty, you had the weakness to fall foul of what alone keeps it afloat, the house of correction. I answered that it was me fixed purpose to make myself scarce at Seville and accordingly, after buying a bat and some shirts, I travelled

through vineyards and olive groves to the ancient city of Carmona, and in three days afterwards, arrived at Cordova

I put up at an inn close by the market-place, giving myself out for the head of a good family at Toledo, travelling for his pleasure. My appearance did not belie the story, and a few pistoles, which I contrived carelessly to chink within the landlord's hearing, pinned his faith upon me veracity. Probably my unfledged youth might lead him to take me for some graceless little truant, who had lobbed his parents and run away. But that was no concern of his—he took the thing just as I gave it him, for fear lest his curiosity should clash with me continuance at his house. For six reals a day, one could live like a gentleman at this inn, where there was generally a considerable concourse of company. About a dozen people sat down at supper. It was whimsical enough, but the whole party plied their knives and forks without speaking a word, except one man, who talked incessantly, right or wrong, and made up for the silence of the rest by his eternal babble. He affected to be a wit, to tell a good story, and took great pains to make the good folks merry by his puns, and accordingly they did laugh most inextinguishably; but it was at him, not with him.

For my part, I paid so little attention to the talk of this rattle, that I should have got up from table without knowing what it was all about, if he had not

brought it home to me busness and me bosom Gentlemen, cried he just as supper was over, I have kept me best story for the last, a very droll thing happened within these few days at the aichbishop of Seville's palace I had it form a young fellow of me acquamtance, who assures me that he was present at the time These words made me heart jump up into me throat, for I had no doubt of this being me exploit, and so it turned out This pleasant gentleman related the facts as they actually happened, and even carried the adventure to its conclusion, of which I was as yet ignorant but now you shall be made as wise as myself.

No sooner had I absconded, than the Moois, who were, according to the progress of the fable and the rising of the interest, to lay violent hands on me appeared upon the stage, for the fell purpose of surpusing me on me bed of turf, where, the author had given them reason to expect me fast asleep but when they thought they were just going to capot the king of Leon they found, to their suiprise, **that** both the king and the knave made a tuck aganst them Here was a hole **in the ballad'** The actors all lost their cue some of them called me by name, others ran to look for me; **here is a fellow bawling as though his bellows would burst, there stands another, muttering to himself about the devil, just as if that reptile could stand upright in such a presence!** The archbishop, perceiving trouble and confusion to lord it behind the scenes, asked what was the mat-

ter. At the sound of the prelate's voice, a page who was the fiddle of the piece, came to the front and spoke thus My lord archbishop, ladies and gentlemen' We are extremely sorry to inform you, as players, but extremely glad, as men and Christians, that the king of Leon is at present in no danger whatever of being taken prisoner by the Moors • he has adopted effectual measures for the security of his royal peison, and to the royal person, as liberty avails little without property, he has irrevocably attached the crown, insignia, and lobes And a happy deliverance for himself and Christendom ' exclaimed the archbishop He has done perfectly right to escape form the enemes of our religion, and to burst form the bonds in which then malice would have laid him By this time, probably, he has reached the confines of his kingdoin, or may have entered the capital May no unlucky accident have retarded him on his journey And that the sin of none such may he heavy on me conscience, I beg leave very positively to make me pleasure known, that he may proceed uninolested by any interruption form this quarter, I should be highly mortified indeed, if his inajesty's pious endeavours were to be frustrated by the slightest indignity form the ministers of that religion, in whose cause he labours and suffers. The pielate, having thus declared his acquiescence in the motives of me flight, ordered me part to be read, and the play to be resumed.

## CHAPTER XL

*Continuation of Scipro story*

As long as I had money in me purse, me landlord was cap in hand, but the moment he began to suspect that the funds were low, he became high and mighty, picked a German quarrel with me, and one morning before breakfast begged it as a favour of me to inarch out of his house. I followed his counsel as proudly as you please, and betook me to a church belonging to the fathers of St Dommic, where, while mass was perforining, an old beggar accosted me on the usual topic of alms. I dropped some small change into his hat, which was truly the orphan's inite, saying at the same time My friend, remeinber in your prayers to mention a situation for me, if your petition is heard with favour, it shall be all the better for you; hearty thanks, and a handsome poundage!

At these words, the beggar surveyed me up and down form head to foot, and answered in a grave tone- What place would you wish to have I should like, replied I, to be footinan in some family where I should do well. He enquired whether the inatter pressed. With all possible Importunity, said I for unless I have the good luck to get settled very soon,

the alternative will be horrible, death by the gripe of absolute famine, or a livelihood in the ranks of your fraternity. If the latter were after all to be your lot, resumed he, it certainly would be rather hard upon you, who have not been brought up to our habits of life, but, with a little use and practice, you would prefer our condition to service, which, partiality apart, is far less respectable than the beggar's vocation. Nevertheless, since you like a menial occupation better than leading a free and independent life, like me, you shall have a birth without more ado. Mean as my appearance is, you must not measure my power by it. Meet me here at the same hour to-morrow.

I took care to keep the appointment. Though at the spot before the time, I had not long to wait before the beggar joined me, and told me to follow him. I did so. He led me to a cellar not far from the church, where he resided. We went in together, and, sitting down on a long bench, at least a hundred years the worse for wear, the conversation took this turn on his part. A good action, as the proverb says, always meets with its reward. You gave me alms yesterday, and that has determined me to get you a place; which shall be soon done, with a blessing on my endeavours. I know an old Dominican, by name father Alexis, a holy monk, a ghostly confessor. I have the honour to do all his little odd jobs, performing my task with so much discretion

and good faith, that he always lends his interest to me and me fuends I have spoken to him about you, and in such terms as to prepossess him la your favour You may be introduced to his whenever whenever you please.

There is not a moment to be lost, said I to the old beggar, let us go to the good monk immediately The mendicant agreed, and led me by the arm to father Alexis, whom we found in his room, hard at work, wilting spiritual letters. He broke off to talk with me As it was the wish of the mendicant, he would do all in his power to serve me Having learnt, pursued he, that signor Balthasar Velasquez is in want of a footboy, I wrote to him this morning on your behalf, and he just sent me for answer, that he would take you without further enquiry on me recommendation This very day you may call on him form me, he is one of me flock, and me very good friend Thereupon the monk preached to me for three quarters of an hour on me moral and religious duties, and how to fulfil them in conscience and honour He enlarged principally on the obligation of serving Velasquez with diligence and devotion and then assured me that he would take care and keep me in me place, provided my master had no very inaterial fault to find with me.

After having thanked the holy peison for his goodness towards me, I left the convent with the beggar, who told me that signor Balthasar Velas-

quez was an old woollen-drapei, but with much sumplicity and good nature in his character. I doubt not, added he, but you will be perfectly coinfortable in his house. I begged to know his place of residence, and repaired thither immediately, aftei promising to make me giatitude inanifest, as soon as I had taken root in me new soil. I went into a large shop, where two fashionable young apprentices were walking up and down, practising new gninaces aganst the enhance of the next customer. I enquired whether their master was at home, saying that I wanted to speak with him form father Alexis. At that venerable name, they shewed me into the counting-house, where their principal was turning over the ledger. I made a low bow, and, coining up to him, Sir, said I, father Alexis ordered me to call here and offer myself as a servant to your honour. Ah me smart lad, answered he, you are heartily welcome. It is enough that the holy man sent you; and I shall take you in prefeience to three or four others who have been recommended. It is a clear case, your wages begin form this day.

A very short tone in the family convinced me, that the head of it was just such a man as he had been described. In point of siinplicity, he was every thing that could be wished, so exquisite a subject for iinposition, that it seemed next to an impossibility, not to exercise me craft upon such a handle. He had been a widower four years, and had two

children, a son of five-and-twenty, and a daughter in her eleventh year. The girl, brought up by a severe duenna, under the spiritual conduct of father Alexis, walked in the high road of virtue, but her brother Gaspard Velasquez, though no pams had been spared to make a good man of him, picked out for himself all the vices of a young profligate. Sometimes he staid away from home for two or three days together, and if on his return, his father ventured to reimonstrate in the least against his proceedings, Gaspard shut his mouth at once, with a haughty toss of the head, and an Impertinent answer

Scipio, said the old man one day, me son is the plague of me life. He is over head and ears in all kinds of debauchery and yet there is no accounting for it, since his education was by no means neglected. I have given him the very best inasters; and me friend father Alexis has done his utmost to tram him up in the way he should go; but there was no breaking him in; inaster Gaspard ran restive, and bolted into downright libertinisin. You may perhaps tell me, that I spared the rod and spoiled the child. Quite otherwise' he was punished when ever the occasion seemed to deinand it, for, though good-tempered at bottom, I am not to be played upon. I have even gone so far as to lock him up, but that only made him more headstrong than before. In short, he is one of those iinpracticable

*in*

GIL BLAS

beings, on whom good example, good advice, and a good horsewhip are equally thrown away If ever he makes any figure in the world, it must be by a miracle from heaven

Though my heart was not grievously wrung by the sorrows of this unhappy father, sympathy was expected from me, and I condoled with him accordingly How much to be pitied you are, sir' said I Virtues like yours deserved to have been handed down in your progeny. The event is quite the reverse, my good lad, answered he. Heaven heard my prayer, and gave me a son, but converted the blessing into an affliction. Among other grounds of complaint against Gaspard, I may tell you in confidence, there is one which gives me a great deal of uneasiness, a vast longing to see his old father, which he too often finds the means of satisfying, in spite of all my caution Your predecessor played into his hands, and was turned away in consequence As for you, I flatter myself that my son will never be able to tamper with your honesty. You will take my side of the question; for doubtless father Alexis has given you your lesson on that head You may rest assured of that, said I; for a good long hour did his reverence lecture me on doing your will and pleasure without let or hindrance; but I can assure you, there was no need of his saying any thing about the matter. I feel within myself a sort of call to serve you faithfully, and I promise to do it with

a zeal, beyond all the temptations of the world to shake or lessen

He who only hears one side, is in danger of deciding partially. Young Velasquez, a mixture of the fribble and the braggart, concluding from the cut of me countenance that I was made up of mortal frailty like me predecessor, drew me aside to, a snug corner, and there talked to me after this fashion Now mind what is said to you, me dear fellow, you may think, I do not know that you are set as a spy upon me by me father; but take especial care how you proceed, for I can assure you most sincerely, that the office is not without very considerable inconvenience to those who undertake it If ever I find that you tell tales out of school, I will give you such a basting as you never had in your life, but if you will make common cause with me and a fool of me father, you may buy golden returns of gratitude from your humble servant. Do you wish me to deal with you upon the nail You shall go snacks in all that we can squeeze out of the old fellow You have only to take your choice fall at once into the ranks either of father or son, for neutrals will come worst off, where the contending parties fight for then existence.

Sir, answered I, you make the shoe pinch very tight, it is self-evident that there is nothing for me to do, but to enlist under your banners, though in me conscience it seems like a crying sin to betray

signor Velasquez That is no concern of yours rejoined Gaspard, he is an old hunk who wants to keep me under his thumb, a curinudgeon who refuses me the rights of nature, in refusing to stand to the expenses and repairs of me pleasures, for pleasures are the necessities of life at five-and-twenty It is in this point of view that you must form your opinion of me father If that is the case, so be it sir, said I, there is no standing aganst so just a subject of complant I am quite at your service to play second riddle in all your laudable enterprises, but let us take especial care to conceal our good understanding, for fear your faithful humble servant should be kicked out of doors It will not be amiss, in me poor opinion, for you to affect an extreme antipathy aganst me some good round abuse would have a very pretty effect, you need not be nice, all the blackguard terns in the dictionary will come at your call Nay, a box on the ear now and then, or a kick on the breech, will break no squares, on the contiary, the more you express your thorough dislike, the more signor Balthasar will pin his faith upon me sleeve My cue will be, apparently to avoid speaking to you if possible. In waiting at table, I shall perform me little attentions to you at arms length, and, whenever your honour may happen to be called over the coals by the shopmen, you must not take it amiss if I abuse you worse than a pickpocket

As plam as chalk form cheese' cried young Velasquez at this last hint, this is adinirable, me friend , at your early age, it is uncommon to meet with such a talent for intrigue, I consider it as a most happy omen for me purpose With such a performer to play up to me, I flatter myself, the old codger will be pinched to the bone and left pennyless You really carry your good opinion of me beyond what me merit will justify, said I, some industry may fall to me share, but not such exalted genius But I shall do me utmost, and if me honest endeavours fail, your candour must find excuses for me Imbecility

It was not long before Gaspard had proof positive, that I was to a hair's breadth the very man he wanted, and the following was precisely the first trick I played into his hand, Balthasar's strong box was in the good man's chamber, by his bed-side, a sort of oratory, with a prayer-book always lying upon it Every time I looked that way, me eyes glistened with hope and pleasure, me heart chuckled over the very idea of what might happen Fair, sweet, cruel box, will you for ever be coy to me addresses May I never experience the heart-felt delight of possessing all your charms for better, for worse? As I went into the room at pleasure, and only Gaspard was warned off the premises, it happened one day that I watched his father. The old gentleman, fancying hiniself unobserved of humself

eye, after having opened his treasury and closed it fast again, hid the key behind the hangings. I took an accurate observation of the place, and communicated the discovery to me young master, who said with an approving hug Ah! me dear Scipio, what glorious news you bring? Our fortune is made, me dear fellow I will furnish you with wax, you shall take the impression of the key, and then our business is done There will be no difficulty in finding a benevolent locksmith in Cordova, where, to do the place justice, there are as many rogues as in any part of Spam

Well' but why, said I to Gaspard, do you want a false key? We may find our account in the proper one Yes, answered he; but I am afraid lest me father, through mistrust or whim, should take a fancy to hiding it elsewhere, and the safest way is, to have one of our own. I commended his precaution, and tailing in with all his principles, got ready for taking the impression of the key this was effected one morning early, while me old master was paying a visit to father Alexis, with whom he for the most part held very long conferences I did not stop here; but availed myself of the key to open the strong box, wherein an ample range of large and small bags threw me into the most delightful perplexity imaginable. I did not know which to choose, there was such a family likeness among them; nevertheless, as the fear of being

caught did not allow of any long deliberation, I laid hands, hap-hazard, on the largest. Then, locking the box carefully, and putting the key back agam behind the hangings, I got away out of the chamber with me booty, and hid it under me bed, in a small closet where I lay

Having performed this exploit so successfully, I ran back as fast as me legs would carry me to young Velasquez, who was waiting at a house where he had given me notice to meet him, and his delight was extieme at the recital of what I had just done. He was so fully satisfied with me, as to lavish caresses without number, and to offer me thrice, in the fulness of his heart, half the contents of the bag, which I did thrice refuse. No, no, sir, said I, this first bag is yours and yours only, apply it to your own uses and occasions. I shall return forthwith to the strong box, where, as our lucky stars have contrived it, there is money enough for both of us. Accordingly, three days afterwards I carried off a second bag, containing, like the first, five hundred crowns, of which I would only handle the fourth part, let Gaspard be as pressing as he pleased to force upon me a brotherly division, share and share alike.

As soon as this young man found himself so flush of money, and consequently in a condition to giatify his hankering after women and play, he gave himself up entirely to the devices of his own iraagina-

tion, nay, his evil genius pursued him so fai, as to make him fall desperately in love with one of those female harpies, who devour without remorse or interinission, and swallow up the largest fortunes His disbursements at her instigation were frightful, and thus it became necessary for me to pay so many visits to the strong box, that old Velasquez at length found out he had been robbed Scipio, said he one morning, I must give you a piece of information , some one robs me, me friend, me strong box has been opened, several bags have been taken out, that is a certam fact whom ought I to accuse of this theft or rather, who else but me son can have committed it ? Gaspard must have got by stealth into me chamber, or else you yourself must have played booty with him, for I am teinpted to believe you in league with him, though to outward appearance you do not set up your horses together And yet I am unwilling to harbour that suspicion, because father Alexis undertook to answer for you honesty I gave him to understand that, by the blessing of heaven on a good natural disposition, me neighbour's goods had no temptation in me sight, and I so happily suited the action to the he, and the he to the action, that me judge pronounced a verdict of acquittal on the evidence of grmace and hypocrisy.

Accordingly the old man dropped the subject, but for all that, there was a general misgiving in his

breast, and it would some times light upon me taking precautions, therefore, against our further attacks, he had a newlock put to his strong box, and always carried the key in his pocket By these means, an embargo being laid on our traffic with the bags, we looked excessively foolish, especially Gaspard, who, being unable any longer to keep his nymph in her usual style, knew very well that he was likely to be tossed out of her window He had, however, invention enough to devise an expedient for keeping his head above water a few days longer, and that was neither more nor less than to get into his clutches, in the form of a loan, me dividend on the joint stock of the strong box I refunded to the last farthing, and this restitution, it is to be hoped, may be set off as an anticipated act of justice to the old draper, in the person of his heir

The young man, having exhausted this scanty supply, and desperate of any other, fell into a deep melancholy, and into ultimate derangement. He no longer looked on his father in any other light, **than** as the bane of his life. His phrenzy broke out into the most dreadful projects, so that, without hsten- ing to the voice of consanguinity or nature, **the** wretch conceived the Impious design of **poisoning** him. **He was not content with making me privy to the atrocious design, but even proposed to render me the instrument of parricide. At the very thought, me blood ran cold within me.** Sn, said I, is it pos-

sible that you are so rejected of heaven, as to have formed this horrid plot What is it in your nature to murder the author of your existence Shall Spam, the favoured abode of the christian faith, bear witness to the commission of a crime, at the fiist blush of which, transatlantic savages would recoil with horror No, me dear master, added I, throwing myself on me knees, no, you will not be guilty of an action, which would raise the hand of all mankind agamst you, and be overtaken by an infamous punishment

I pressed many arguments beside on Gaspard, to dissuade him form so fearful an enterprise How the deuce I came by all the moral and religious topics, which I brought to act agamst the fortress of his despair, is more than I can account for, but it is certam that I preached like a doctor of Salamanca, though a mere stripling, born of a gipsy fortune-teller And yet it was to no purpose, that I suggested the duty of commumng with his own better resolutions, and stoutly wrestling with the fiend, who was lying in wait for his Immortal soul; nay pious eloquence was dissipated into air. His head hung sullenly on his bosom, and his tongue uttered no sound, in answer to all me mollifying exhortations, so that there was every reason to conclude, he would not swerve form his purpose

Hereupon, taking me own measures I requested a private interview with me old master; and being

closeted with him So, said I, allow me to throw myself at your feet, and to Implore your pity In pathetic accord with me moving accents, I prostrated myself before him, with me face all bathed in tears The merchant, surprised at what he saw and heard, asked the cause of me distress Remorse of conscience and repentance, answered I, but neither repentance nor remorse can ever wash out me guilt I have been weak enough to give ear to your son, and to be his accomplice in robbing you To this confession I added a sincere acknowledgment of all that had happened, with the particulars of me late conversation with Gaspard, whose design I laid open without the least reserve

Bad as was the opinion which old Velasquez entertained of his son, he could scarcely believe his ears Nevertheless, finding no good reason to distrust the truth of me account, Scipio, said he raising me from the ground, where I had till now been prostrate at his feet, I forgive you in consideration of the important notice you have communicated Gaspard! pursued he, raising his voice up to the loudness of anguish, does Gaspard aim a blow at me life Ah ' ungrateful son, unnatural monster! better thou hadst never been born, or stifled at thy birth, than to have been \ eared for the destruction of thy father! What plea, what object, what pal-ation of the atrocious deed? I furnished thee annually with a leasonable allowance for thy plea-

tures, and what wouldst thou have More<sup>?</sup> Must I have dramed me fortune to the dregs, to support thee in thy extravagance Having vented his feelings in this bitter apostrophe, he enjoined secrecy on me, and told me to leave him alone, while he considered how to act in so delicate a conjuncture

I was very anxious to know what resolution this unhappy father would take, when on that very day he sent for Gaspard, and addressed him thus without betraying the inward emotions of his heart My son, I have received a letter from Merda, purporting that if you are disposed to marry, you may make a match with a very fine girl of fifteen, with a handsome fortune in her pocket If you have not forsworn that happy and holy estate, we will set out to-morrow morning by daybreak for Merida you will see the lady in question, and if she hits your fancy, the business may soon be settled, Gaspard, pricking up his ears at a handsome fortune, and already fingering the cash by anticipation, answered unhesitatingly that he was ready to undertake the journey; and accordingly they departed the following day at sun-rise, without attendants, mounted on good mules

Having reached the mountans of Fesna, in a delightful spot for the operations of banditti, but terror-stirring to the timid souls of travellers, Balthasar dismounted, and desired his son to do likewise. The young man obeyed, but expressed his





surprise at such a requisition, in so lonely a place I will tell you the reason presently, answered the old man, darting at him a look of mingled grief and anger\* We are not going to Merida, and the alleged courtship was only an invention of mine, for the purpose of drawing you hither. I am not ignorant, ungrateful and unnatural son, I am not uninformed of your meditated crime. I am aware that a poison, prepared by your hands, was to have been administered to me but, mad as you are, could it enter into your contemplation that my life could have been invaded with impunity by such means? How fatally mistaken<sup>1</sup> Your crime would soon have been detected, and you would have perished under the hands of the executioner There is a safer way of glutting your fell malice, without exposing yourself to an ignominious death, we are here without witnesses, and in a place where daily murders are perpetrated, since you are so thirsty after my blood, plunge your dagger into my bosom the assassination will naturally be laid at the door of some banditti After these words, Balthazar, laying his breast bare, and pointing to his heart, ended with this challenge Here, Gasparid, strike deep enough, strike home, make me pay that forfeit for having engendered such a disgrace to human nature, and no more than what is due to so monstrous a production.

Young Velasquez, struck by this leproach as by

a thunderbolt, far from pleading in his own justification, fell instantly lifeless at his father's feet. The good old man, hailing the germ of repentance in this unfeigned testimony of shame, could not help yielding to paternal weakness, he made all possible haste to give his assistance, but Gaspard had no sooner recovered the use of his senses, than, unable to stand in the presence of a father so justly offended, he made an effort to raise himself from the ground, then sprang upon his mule, and galloped out of sight without saying one word. Balthasar suffered him to take his own course, and returned to Cordova, little doubting but conscience would play its part in revenging his wrongs. Six months afterwards, it appeared that the culprit had thrown himself into the Carthusian convent at Seville, there to pass the remnant of his days in penance.

## CHAPTER XII

### *Conclusion of Scipio's story*

BAD example some times produces the converse of itself. The behaviour of young Velasquez made me think seriously on my own predicament. I began to wrestle with my thievish propensities, and to live

like one of the better sort. A confirmed habit of pouncing upon money wherever I could get it, had been contracted by such a long succession of individual acts, that it was no easy matter to say where it should stop. And yet I was in hopes to accomplish my own reformation, under the idea that, to become virtuous, a man had nothing to do but to contract the desire of being so. I therefore undertook this great work, and heaven seemed to smile upon my efforts. I left off eyeing the old draper's strong box with the carnal regard of avaricious longing. Nay, I verily believe, that if it had depended on my own will and pleasure to have turned over the contents to my own use, I should have abstained from the crime of picking and stealing. It must, however, be admitted, that it would have been an unadvisable measure to tempt my new-born integrity with meats too strong for its stomach. And Velasquez was nurse enough to keep me on a proper diet.

Don Mannquez de Medrano, a young gentleman, knight of Alcantara, was in the habit of coming backwards and forwards to our house. He was a customer, one of our principal in point of rank, if not punctual in point of pay. I had the happiness to find favour with this knight, who never met me without that sort of notice which encouraged conversation, and with that conversation he appeared always to be very much pleased. Scipio, said he

one day, if I had a footman of your kidney, it would be as good as a fortune to me, and if you were not in the service of a man who stands so high in me regards, I should make no scruple about enticing you away Sir, answered I, you would have very little trouble in succeeding, for I am distractedly partial to people of fashion, it is my weak side their free and easy manners fascinate me to the extreme of folly That being the case, replied don Mannquez, I will at once beg signor Balthasar to turn you over from his household to mme he will scarcely refuse me such a request Accordingly Velasquez was kind and complying, with so much the less violence to his own private feelings, as there seemed no reason to think, that if a man paited with one knavish servant, he might not easily get another in his place To me the change was all for the better, since a tradesman's service appeared but a beggarly condition, in comparson with the office of own man to a knight of Alcantara

, To draw a faithful likeness of me new master, I must describe him as a gentleman possessing every requisite of person, figure, manners, and disposition Nor was that all; for his courage and honour were equal to his other qualities the goods of fortune were the only good things he wanted; but being the younger son of a family inore distinguished by descent than opulence, he was obliged to draw for his expenses on an old aunt living at Toledo, who

loved him as her own child, and administered to his occasions with affectionate liberality. He was always well dressed, and every where well received. He visited the principal ladies in the city, and among others the marchioness of Almenara. She was a widow of seventy-two, but the centre of attraction to all the fashionable society of Cordova, by the elegance of her manners and the sprightliness of her conversation. men as well as women land themselves out for an introduction, because her parties conferred at once on the frequenters the patent of good company.

My master was one of that lady's most assiduous courtiers. After leaving her one evening, his spirits seemed to be more elevated than was natural to him. Sir, said I, you are evidently in a good deal of agitation, may your faithful servant ask on what account? Has any thing happened out of the common way? The young gallant smiled at so home a question, and owned candidly that he had just been engaged in a serious conversation with the marchioness of Almenara. I will lay a wager, said I laughing outright, that this moppet of threescore and ten, this girl in her second childhood, has been unfolding to you all the secret movements of a tender, susceptible heart. Do not make a jest of it, answered he, for the fact is, me friend, that the marchioness is seriously in love with me. She told me that the narrowness of me circumstances was as

well known to her as the nobility of me birth , that she had taken a liking to me, and was determmed to place me at me ease by marriage, since she could not decently lay her fortune at me feet on any other terms That this marrage would expose her to public ridicule, she professed to have considened, that scandal would be busy at her expense, in short, that she should pass for an old fool with an ambitious eye and a liquorish constitution No matter for that' She was not to be awed form the career of her humour by quips and sentences her only alarm was, lest I should either make sport of her intentions, or torment her more grievously by ray aversion

Such, continued the knight, was the substance of the marchioness's declaration, and I am the more astonished at it, because she is the most prudent and sensible woman in Cordova, wherefore I answered "by expressing me surprise, at her honouring me with the offer of her hand, since she had hitherto persisted in her resolution of reinaming in a state of widowhood To this she replied, that having a considerable fortune, it would give her pleasure to share it in her life-time with a man of honour to whom she was attached To all appearance then, rejomed I, you have made up your mind to take a lover's leap. Can you doubt about that answered he. The marchioness is immensely rich, with excellent qualities both of head and heart. It

would be the extreme of folly and fastidiousness, to let so advantageous a settlement slip through me fingers

I entirely approved me master's purpose of profiting by so fine an opportunity to make his fortune, and even advised him to bring the matter to a short issue, for fear of a change in the wind. Happily the lady had the business more at heart than myself, her orders were given so effectually, that the necessary forms and ceremonies were soon got over\*. When it became known in Coidova, that the old marchioness of Almenara was getting herself ready to be the bride of young don Manriquez de Medrano, the wits began breaking their odd quirks and remnants in derision of the widow, but though she heard her own detractions, she did not put them to mending, the town might talk as they pleased, for when she said she would die a widow, she did not think to live till she were married. The wedding was solemnized with a publicity and splendour which furnished fresh food for evil tongues. The bride, said they, might at least have had the modesty to dispense with noise and ostentation, so unbecoming in an old widow who marries a young husband.

The marchioness, far enough from yielding to the suggestions of shame at her own inconsistency, or the disparity of their ages, yielded herself up without constraint to the expression of the most lively joy. She gave a grand conceit and supper, with a

ball afterwards, and invited all the principal families in Cordova Just before the close of the ball, the new married couple disappeared, and were shewn to an apartment where, with no other witnesses but her own maid and myself, she spoke to me master in these terms —Don Mannquez, this is your apartment, mine is in another part of the house we will pass the night in separate 100ins, and will live together by day like mother and son At fiist the knight did not know what to make of this he thought that the lady was only trying his temper, as if her coldness must be wooed to kindness, and her love, like her pardon, not unsought, be won Imagining, therefore, that good manners required, at least, the shew of passion, he made his advances, and offered, according to the laws of amorous suit enacted in such cases, to assist in the disencumbering duties of her toilet, but, so far from allowing him to interfere with the province of her servant, she pushed him back with a serious air, saying, Hold, don Mannquez if you take me for one of those sweet-toothed old women, who marry a second time from mere incontinence, you do me manifest injustice my proposals were not fraught with conditions of hard service, as the tenure of our nuptial contract; the gift of my heart was unmixed with sensual dross, and your gratitude is only drawn upon for returns of pure and platonic friendship. After this explanation, she left me mas-

ter and me in our apartment, and withdrew to her own with her attendant, foibidding the bridegroom, in the most positive manner, to attempt retiring with her

After her departure, it was some time before we recovered form our surprise at what we had just heard Scipio, said me master, could you ever have believed that the marchioness would have talked in such a stram<sup>?</sup> What think you of so philosophic a bride I think, sir, answered I, that she is a phenix among the brood of hymen It is for all the world like a good living without parochial duties For me part, replied don Mannquez, there is, nothing so much to me taste as a wife of modest pretensions, and I mean to make her amends for the trophy she has raised to unadulterated esteem, by all the delicate attentions in me power to pay We kept up the subject of the lady's moderation till it was full time to separate My quarters were fixed in an anti-room with a book-case bedstead; me master's in an elegant bed-chamber with every appurtenance except one but however necessary it might be to play the disappointed bridegroom, I am much mistaken if in the bottom of his soul he was half so much afraid of sleeping by himself as of being encumbered with a bed-fellow

The rejoicings began a g a n on the following day, and the bride was so jocund on the occasion, that the bolts of the fools among her visitors were not

soon shot She was the first to laugh at all then pointless jokes, nay, she even set the little wits to work, by giving them an example of pleasantry, which they were very little able to follow The happy man, on his part, seemed to be very little less happy than his partner, and one would have sworn, judging by the glance of satisfaction which accompanied his language and deportment, that he liked mutton better than lamb This well-matched pair had a second conversation in the evening, and then it was decided, that without interfering in the least with one another, they should live together just on the same footing as they had lived before marriage At all events, much credit must be given to don Mannquez on one account he did, form delicate consideration towards his wife, what few husbands would have done under his circumstances; for he discarded a little sempstress of whom he was very fond, and who was very fond of him, because he did not choose to keep up a connection insulting to the feelings of a lady so studious of his

While he was furnishing such unusual testimonies of gratitude to his elderly benefactress, she overpaid and doubly paid her debt of obligation, even without diving into its nature or extent She gave him the master key of her strong box, which was better provided than that of Velasquez Though she had reduced her establishment during widowhood, it was now replaced upon the same footing as

in the life time of her first husband, the coinplement of household servants was enlarged, the stud and equipages were in the very fiist style, in a word, by her generosity and kindness, the most beggarly knight belonging to the order of Alcantara became the most momed member of the fraternity You may perhaps be disposed to ask me, how much I was in pocket by all that and me answer is, fifty pistoles from me mistress, and a hundred from me master, who moreover appointed me his secretary, with a salary of four hundred crowns, nay, his confidence was so unbounded that I was fixed on to fill the office of treasurer

Treasurer cried I, interrupting Scipio at the very idea, and bursting into an Immodeiate fit of laughter Yes, sir, replied he, with a cool, unflinching seriousness, you are perfectly nIght, treasurer was the word , and I may venture to say that the duties of the office were executed without the slightest occasion for a committee of enquiry True it is that the balance may be somewhat against me; for I was always in the habit of overdrawing me wages, and as the firm was dissolved somewhat suddenly, it is by no means impossible that the balance of me cash account might be on the wrong side but, at all events, it was me last slip, and since that time me ways have been ways of uprightness, and honesty.

Thus was I, continued this son of a gipsy, secretary and treasurer to don Mannquez, who, to all appearance, was as happy in me as I in him, when he received a letter from Toledo, announcing that his aunt, donna Theodora Moscoso, was on her last legs. He was so much affected by the news, as to set out instantly and pay his duty to that lady, who had been more than a mother to him for several years. I attended him on the journey, with only two under servants, we were all mounted on the best horses in the stable, and reached Toledo without loss of time, where we found donna Theodora in a state to warrant our hopes that she would not, at present, weigh anchor on her outward bound voyage; and, in fact, our judgment on her case, though point blank in contradiction to that of an old physician who attended her, proved by the event that we knew at least as much of the matter as he did.

While the health of our venerable relative was improving from day to day, less perhaps from the effect of the prescriptions, than in consequence of her dear nephew's presence, your worthy friend the treasurer passed his time in the pleasantest manner possible, with some young people whose acquaintance was admirably calculated to ventilate the confined cash in his pocket. Some times they enticed me to the tennis-court, and took me in for a **game** ; on those occasions, not being **quite so steady a**

This intelligence kindled the flame of passion within me, but not, it must be confessed, a flame which could be acknowledged without a blush. I took it for granted that my triumph over her scruples would be easy, if my biddings were high enough to command the ordinary market of female chastity, but Beatrice was a pearl beyond price. In vain did I solicit her through the channel of some intriguing gossips, with the offer of my purse and of my most tender attentions; she rejected all my proposals with disdain. I had recourse to the lover's last remedy, and offered her my hand, which she deigned to accept on the strength of my being secretary and treasurer to don Mannquez. As it seemed expedient to keep our marriage secret for some time, the ceremony was performed privately in presence of dame Lorenza Sephora, Seraphina's governess, and before some others of the count de Polan's household. After our happy union, Beatrice contrived the means of our meeting by day, and passing some part of every night together in the garden, whither I repaired through a little gate of which she gave me a key. Never were man and wife better pleased with each other than Beatrice and myself, with equal impatience did we watch for the hour of our appointment; with congenial emotions of eager sensibility did we hasten to the spot, and the moments which we passed together, though countless form their number in the calendar.

of cold indifference, to us were few and fleeting, in comparson with that eternity of mutual bliss for which we panted.

One night, a night which should be expunged from the almanac, a night of darkness and despair, contrasted with the brightness of all our former nights, I was surprised on approaching the garden, to find the little gate open. This unusual circumstance alarmed me; for it seemed to augur some\* thing inauspicious to me happiness I turned pale and treibled, as if with a foreknowledge of what was going to happen Advancing in the dark towards a bower, where our private meetings had usually taken place, I heard a man's voice. I stopped on the instant to listen, when the following words struck like the sound of death upon me ear: Do not keep me languishing in suspence, me dear Beatrice, make me happiness con-sider, and consider that your own fortunes are closely licked with mine. Instead of having patience to hear further, it seemed as if more had been said than blood could expiate, that devil, jealousy, took possession of me soul, I drew me sword, and breathing only vengeance, rushed into the bower Ah base seducer, cried I, whoever you are, you shall tear this heart form out me breast, rather than touch me honour on its tenderest point With the words on me lips, I attacked the gentleman who was talking with Beatrice. He stood upon his guard without

more ado, like a man much better acquainted with the science of arms than myself, who had only received a few lessons from a fencing-master at Cordova. And yet, strong as his sword-arm was, I made a thrust which he could not parry, or what is more likely, his foot slipped I saw him fall, and fancying that I had wounded him mortally, ran away as hard as my legs would carry me, without deigning to answer Beatrice, who would have called me back.

Yes, indeed' said Scipio's wife, resolved to have her share in the development of the story, I called out for the purpose of undeceiving him. The gentleman conversing with me in the arbour, was don Ferdinand de Leyva. This nobleman, who was in love with my mistress Julia, had laid a plan for running away with her, from despair of being able to obtain her hand by any other means, and I had myself made this assignation with him in the garden, to concert measures for the elopement, and with his fortune he assured me that my own was closely licked, but it was in vain that I screamed after my husband, he darted from me as if my very touch were contamination.

In such a state of mind, resumed Scipio, I was capable of any thing. Those who know by experience what jealousy is, into what extravagance it drives the best regulated spirits, will be at no loss to conceive the disorder it must have produced in me

Weak brain. I passed in a moment from one extreme to another another of hatred succeeded instantaneously to all my former sentiments of affection for my wife. I took an oath never to see her more, and to banish her for ever from my memory. Besides, the supposed death of a man lay upon my conscience, and under that idea, I was afraid of falling into the hands of justice, so that every torment which could be accumulated on the head of guilt and misery by the fury of despair and the demon of remorse, was the remediless companion of my wretched flight. In this dreadful situation, thinking only of my escape, I returned home no more, but immediately quitted Toledo, with no other provision for my journey but the clothes on my back. It is true, I had about sixty pistoles in my pocket, a tolerable supply for a young man, whose views in life pointed no higher than a good service.

I walked forward all night, or rather ran, for the phantom of an alguazil always dogging me at the heels made me perform wonders of pedestrian activity. The dawn overtook me between Rodillas and Maqueda. When I was at the latter town, finding myself a little weary, I went into the church which was just opened, and, having put up a short prayer, sat down on a bench to rest. I began musing on the state of my affairs, which were sufficiently out at elbows to require all my skill in patch-work, **but** the

time for reflection as well as for repentance was cut short. The church echoed on a sudden with three or four smacks of a whip, which made me conclude that some carrier was on the load. I immediately got up to go and see whether I was right or wrong. At the door, I found a man, mounted on a mule, leading two others by the halter. Stop, me friend, said I. whither are these mules going. To Madrid, answered he. I came hither with two good Dominicans, and am now setting out on me return.

Such an opportunity of going to Madrid gave me an itching desire for the expedition. I made me bargain with the muleteer; jumped upon one of his mules, and away we scampered towards Illescas, where we were to put up for the night. Scarcely were we out of Maqueda, before the muleteer, a man from five-and-thirty to forty, began chanting the church service with a most collegiate twang. This trial of his lungs began with matins, in the drowsy tone of a canon between asleep and awake, then he roared out the Belief, alternately in contralto, tenor, and bass, in all the harmonious confusion of high mass. and not content with that, he rang the bell for vespers, without sparing me a single petition or so much as a bar of the *magnificat*. Though the scoundrel almost cracked the drum of me ear I could not help laughing heartily, and even egged him on to make the welkin reverberate with his hal-lulujahs, when the anthem was suspended a few

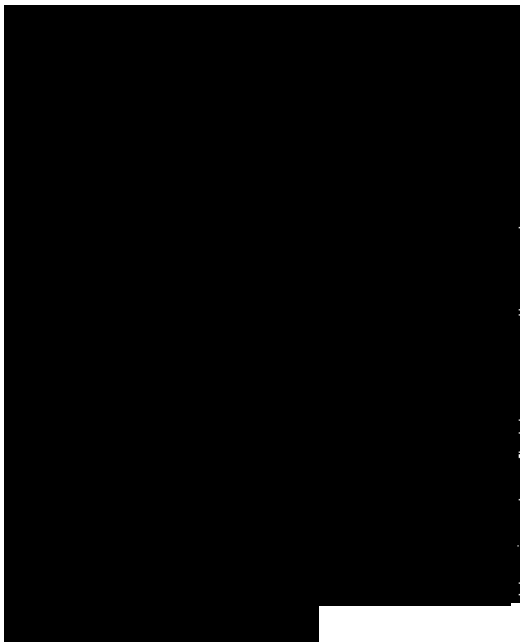
reSts, for the necessary purpose of supplying wind to the organ. Courage, me friend! said I: go on and prosper. If heaven has given you a good capacious throat, you are neither a niggard nor a perverter of its precious boon. Oh! certainly not for the matter of that, cried he. happily for me immortal soul, I am not like carriers in general, Who sing nothing but profane songs about love or drinking I (do not even defile me lips with ballads on our wars against the Moors, such subjects are at least light and unedifying, if not licentious and impure. You have, replied I, an evangelical purity of heart which belongs only to the elect among muleteers. With this excessive squeamishness of yours about the choice of your music, have you also taken a vow of continence, wherever there is a young bar-maid to be picked up at an inn? Assuredly, rejoined he, chastity is also a virtue by which it is me pride to ward off the temptations of the road, where me Only business is to look after me mules I was in no small degree astonished at such pious sentiments form -this prodigy of psalm-singing mule-drivers; so that looking upon him as a man above the vamties and corruptions of this nether world, I fell into chat with him after he had. gone the length of his tether in singing.

We got to Illescas late in the day On entering the inn-yard, I left the care of the mules to me coinpamon, and went into the kitchen, where I ordered

the landlord to get us a good supper; which he promised to perform so much to my satisfaction, as to make me remember all the days of my life, what usage travellers meet with at his house. Ask, added he, now only ask your carrier what sort of a man I am. By all the powers of seasoning! I would defy the best cook in Madrid or Toledo to make an olio at all to be compared with mine. I shall treat you this evening with some stewed rabbit after a receipt of my own; you will then see whether it is any boast to say that I know how to send up a supper. Thereupon, shewing me a stewpan with a young rabbit, as he said, cut up into pieces; There, continued he, is what I mean to favour you with. When I shall have thrown in a little pepper, some salt, wine, a handful of sweet herbs, and a few other ingredients which I keep for my own sauces, you may depend on sitting down to such a dish, as would not disgrace the table of a chancellor or an archbishop.

The landlord, having thus done justice to his own merits, began to work upon the materials he had prepared. While he was labouring in his vocation, I went into a room, where lying down on a sort of couch, I fell fast asleep through fatigue, having taken no rest the night before. In the space of about two hours, the muleteer came and awakened me, with the information that supper was ready, and a pressing request to take my place at table, The





cloth was laid for two, and we sat down to the Hashed rabbit. I played me knife and fork most in manfully, finding the flavour delicious, whether from the force of hunger in communicating a candid mode of interpretation to me palate, or from the natural effect of the ingredients compounded by the cook. A Jount of roast mutton was next served up It was remarkable that the earner only paid his respects to this last article; and I asked him why he had not taken his hare of the other He answered with a suppressed smile, that he was not fond of made dishes. This reason, or rather the turn of countenance with which it was alleged, seemed to imply more than was expressed You have not told me, said I, the real meaning of your not eating the fricasee ; do have the goodness to explain it at once. since you are so curious to be made acquainted with it, replied he, I must own that I have an insuperable aversion to cramming my-stomach with meats in masquerade, since one evening at an inn on the road between Toledo and Cuenca, they served me up, instead of a wild rabbit, a hash of tame cat; enough of all conscience, ever after to set me intestines in battle array against all minces, stews, and force-meats

No sooner had the muleteer let me into this secret, than in spite of the hunger which raged within me, my appetite left me completely in the lurch. I conceived in all the horrors of extreme loathing,

that I had been eating a cat dressed up as the double of a rabbit; and the fricassee had no longer any power over me senses, except by producing a strong inclination to letch. My compamon did not lessen me tendency that way, by telling me that the inn-keepers in Spam, as well as the pastry-cooks, were very much in the habit of making that substitution. The drift of the conversation was, as you may perceive, very much in the nature of a lenitive to me stomach, so much so that I had no inind to meddle any more with the dish of undefinables, nor wen to make an attack upon the roast meat, for fear the mutton should have performed its duty by deputy as well as the rabbit. I jumped up form table cursing the cookery, the cook, and the whole establishment then, throwing myself down upon the sofa, I passed the night with less nausea than might reasonably have been expected. The day following with the dawn, after having paid the reckoning with as princely an air as if we had been treated like princes, away went I form Illescas, bearing me faculties so strongly iinpregnated with fricassee, that I took every animal which crossed the road, of whatever species or dimensions, for a cat.

We got to Madrid be times, where I had no sootier settled with me carrier, than I hired a ready-furnished lodging near the Sun-gate, My eyes, though accustomed to the great world, were nevertheless

dazzled by the concourse of nobility which was ordinarily seen in the quarter of the couit I admired the prodigious number of carriages, and the countless list of gentlemen, pages, gentlemen's gentlemen, and plam downright footmen in the tram of the grandees. My adrauation exceeded all bounds, on going to the king's levee, and beholding the monarch in the midst of his court The effect of the scene was enchanting, and I said to myself It is no wonder they should say that one must see the court of Madrid, to form any adequate idea of its magnificence I am delighted to have directed me course hither, and feel a sort of prescience within me that I shall not come away without taking fortune by surprise. I caught nothing napping, however, but me own prudence, in making some thriftless, expensive acquamtaunce. My money oozed away in the lapid thaw of me propriety and better judgment, so that it became a measure of expedient degradation to throw away me tianscendent merit on a pedagogue of Salamanca, whom some family lawsuit or other concern had brought to Madrid, where he was born, and where chance, more whimsical than wise, thrust me within the horizon of his knowledge I became his right hand, his prime principal agent; and dogged him at the heels to the university when he returned thither.

My new employer went by the name of don Ignacio de Ipigna. He furnished himself with the

handle of don, inasmuch as he had been tutor to a nobleman of the first rank, who had recompensed his early services with an annuity for life he likewise derived a snug little salary from his professorship in the university, and in addition to all this, laid the public under a yearly contribution of two or three hundred pistoles for books of uninstructional morality, which he protruded from the press periodically by weight and measure. The manner in which he worked up the shreds and patches of his composition deserves a notice somewhat more than cursory. The heavy hours of the forenoon were spent in muzzing over Hebrew, Greek, and Latin authors, and in writing down upon little squares of card every pithy sentence or striking thought which occurred in the morning's reading. According to the progress of this literary Pam, in winning tricks from the ancients, he employed me to score up his honours in the form of an Apollo's wreath these metaphysical garlands were strung upon wire, and each garland made a pocket volume. What an execrable hash of wholesome viands did we cook up. The commandments set at loggerheads with an utter confusion of tables, Epicurean conclusions engrafted on stoical premisses! Tully quoting Epicetetus, and Seneca supporting his antitheses on the authority of monkish rhyme'; Scarcely a month elapsed without our putting forth at least two volumes, so that the press was kept continually groan

mg under the weight of our transgressions    What seemed most extraordinary of all, was that these literary larcenies were palmed upon the purchasers for spick and span new wares    and if, by any strange and improbable chance, a thick-headed critic should stumble with his noddle smack agamst some palpable plagiansin, the author would plead guilty to the indictment, and make a merit of serving up at second-hand

**What Gelhus or StobÆus hash'd before,  
Though chewed by blind old scholiasts o'er and o'er**

He was also a great commentator, and filled his notes chuck full of so much erudition, as to multiply whole pages of discussion upon what homely common-sense would have consigned to the brief alteinative of a query.

**Disputes of Me or Te, or Aut or At,  
To sound or sink in cano O or A,  
Or give up Cicero to C or K**

As almost every author, ethical and didactic, from Hesiod down to himself, took his turn to dangle on some one or other of our manuscript garlands, it was impossible for me not to suck in somewhat of sage nurture from so copious a stream of philosophy    it would be rank ingratitude to shift; off me obligation    My hand-writing also became strictly and decidedly legible, by dint of continual t r a n s

scription me estate was more that of a pupil than of a servant and me morals were not neglected, while me mind was polished and me faculties raised above their former level Scipio' he used to say, when he chanced to hear of any serving lad with more cunning than honesty in his dealings, beware, me good boy, how you take after the evil example of that graceless villam " The honour of a servant is his fidelity, his highest virtues are submission and obedience Be studious of thy master's interests, be diligent in his affairs, and faithful to the trust which he repositeth in thee Thy time and thy labour belong unto him Defraud him not thereof, for he payeth thee for them " To sum up all, don Ignacio lost no opportunity of leading me on in the path of virtue and his prudent counsels sank so deep into me heart, as to keep under any thing like even the slightest wish of playing him a rogue's tuck dunng the fifteen months which I spent in his service

I have already mentioned that doctor de Ipigna was a native of Madrid He had a relation there, by name Catahna, waiting-inaid to the lady who officiated as nurse to the heir-apparent This abigail, the same through whose intervention I got signor de Santillane released from the tower of Segovia, intent on rendering a service to don Ignacio, prevailed with her mistress to petition the duke of Lerma for some preferment. The minister named

him for the archdeaconry of Grenada, which as a conquered country, is in the king's gift. We repaired immediately to Madrid on receiving the intelligence, as the doctor wished to thank his patronesses before he took possession of his benefice. I had more than one opportunity of seeing Catahna, and conveying with her. The cheerful turn of me temper and a certain easy air of good company were altogether to her taste, for me part, I found her so much to me liking, that I could not help saying yes to the little advances of partiality which she made in me favour. In short, we got to feel very kindly towards each other. You must not write a comment with your nails, me dear Beatrice, on this episode in the romance of me amours, because I was firmly persuaded of your inconstancy, and you will allow that heresy, though Impious, being also blind, me penance may reasonably be remitted on sincere conversion.

In the mean time doctor Ignacio was making ready to set out for Grenada. His relation and myself, out of our wits at the Impending separation, **had** recourse to an expedient which rescued us from its horrors. I shammed illness, complained of me head, complained of me chest, and made a characteristic **wry** face for every pain and ache, in the catalogue of human infirmities. My master called in a physician who told me **with** a grave face, **after putting his questions in the usual course, that me**

complaint was of a much more serious nature than it might appear to unprofessional observation, and that, according to all present likelihood, I should keep me chamber a long time. The doctor, timent to take possession of his preferment, did not think it quite so well to delay his departure, but chose rather to hire another boy, he therefore contented himself with handing me over to the care of a nurse, with whom he left a sum of money to bury me if I should die, or to reinunerate me for me services if I should recover

As soon as I knew don Ignacio to be safe on the road for Grenada, I was cured of all me maladies. I got up, made me final bow to the physician who had evinced so thorough a knowledge of me case, and fairly turned me nurse out of doors, who made her retreat good with baggage and aminution, to the amount of more than half the sum for which she ought to have accounted with me While I was enacting the sick man, Catalina was playing another part about the person of her mistress, donna Anna de Guevara, into whose conception having by dint of many a wordy process inserted the notion, that I was the man of all others ready cut and dry for an intrigue, she induced her to choose me for one of her agents. The royal and most catholic nurse whose genius for great undertakings was either produced or exasperated by the love of great possessions, having occasion for suitable ministers, re-

ceived me among her hangers-on, and lost no opportunity of ascertaming how far I was foi her purpose She confided some commissions to me care, which, vanity apart, called for no little addiess, and what they called for was ready at hand accordingly, she gave me all possible credit for the diligent execution of me office, while me discontent swelled high against her for fobbing me off with the cold lecoinpense of approbation The good lady was so abommably avaricious, as not to give me a working partner's share in the profits of me industry, nor to allow for the wear and tear of me conscience She seemed inchmed to consider, that by paying me me wages, all the requisitions of christian charty were made good between us This excess of illiberal econome would soon have paited us, had it not been for the fascination of Catalina's gentle virtues, who became more desperately in love with me from day to day, and completed the paroxysm by a formal pIoposal of formalFair and softly, me pretty friend, said I we must look before we leap into that bottomless gulph the first point to be settled is to ascertain the death of a young woman, who obtamed the lefusai before you, and made me supremely happy, for no other purpose but to anticipate the purgatory of an intermediate state in the present All a mere sham, a put off! answered Catahna. you swear you are married only by way of throwing-a genteel veil over your

abhorrence of me person and manners In vam did I call all the powers to witness, that what I said was solemnly true me sincere avowal was considered as a mere copy of me countenance, the lady was grievously offended, and changed her whole behaviour in regard to me There was no downright quarrel, but our tender intercourse became visibly more rigid and unaccommodating, so that nothing further took place between us but cold formality and common-place attentions

Just at this nick of time, I heard that signor Gil Bias de Santillane, secretary to the prime-minister of the Spanish monarchy, wanted a servant, and the situation was the more flattering, as it bore the bell among all the vacancies of the court register office Signor de Santillane, they told me, was one of the first men, high in favour with the duke of Lerma, and consequently in the direct road to fortune his heart, too,, was cast in the mould of generosity by doing his business, you most assuredly did your own The opportunity was too good to be neglected I went and offered myself to signor Gil Bias, to whom I felt me heart grow form the first, for me sentiments were fixed by the turn of his physiognomy. There could be no question about leaving the royal and most catholic nurse for him and it is to be hoped, I shall never have any other master

Here ended Scipios story. But he continued

speaking, and addiessed himself to me Signor de Santillane, do me the favour to assure these ladies, that you have always known me for a faithful and zealous servant Your testrmony will stand me in good stead, and vouch for a sincere reformation in the son of Coschna

Yes, ladies, said I, it is even so. Though Scipio in his childhood was a very scape-grace, he has been born anew, and is now the exact model of a trusty domestic Fa form having any complants to make against him, me debt is infinite On the fatal night when I was carried off to the tower of Segovia, he saved me effects form pillage, and refunded what he might have taken to himself with iinpunity not contented with rescuing me worldly pelf, he came out of pure friendship and shut himself up with me in me prison, preferring the melancholy syinpathies of adverse fortune to all the charins of lusty, buoyant liberty.

## BOOK THE ELEVENTH

### CHAPTER THE FIRST

*Containing the subject of the greatest joy that Gd Blas ever felt, followed up, as our greatest pleasures too generally are, by the most melancholy event of his life Great changes at court, producing among other important I evolutions, the return of Santillane*

I HAVE observed already that Antonia and Beatrice understood one another perfectly well, the latter falling meekly and modestly into the trammels of an humble attendant on her lady, and the former taking very kindly to the rank of a mistress and superior. Scipio and myself were husbands, too rich in nature's gifts and in the affections of our spouses, not very soon to have the satisfaction of becoming fathers. our lasses were as women wish to be who love their lords, almost at the same moment Beatrice's time was up first she was safely delivered of a daughter, and in a few days afterwards Antoma completed the general joy, by presenting me with a son. I sent me secretary to Valencia

with the welcome tidings the governor came to Liras with Seraphina and the marchioness de Phego, to be present at the baptismal ceremony, for he made it his pleas me to add this testimony of affection to all his foimer kindnesses As that nobleman stood godfather, and the marchioness god mother to me son, he was named Alphonso, and the governor's lady, wishing to draw the bonds of sponsorship still closer in this friendly party, stood for Seipios daughter, to whom we gave the name of Seraphina

The rejoicings at the birth of me son were not confined to the mansion-house the villagers of Lirias celebrated the event by festivities, which were meant as a giateful token, to prove how much the little neighbourhood partook in all the satisfactions of then landlord But alas our carousals were of short continuance, or to speak more suitably to the subject, they were turned into weeping, wailing, and lamentation, by a catastrophe which more than twenty years have not been sufficient to blot form me memory nor will future time, however distant, make me think of it but with the bitterest letrospect my son died; and his mother, though perfectly recovered form her confnement, very soon followed him a violent fever carried off me dear wife, after we had been married fourteen months. Let the reader conceive, if he is equal to the task, the grief With which I was overwhelmed: I fell into a stupids

proportion as he found more or less disposition in me to listen to the words of comfort, and to leeward the affectionate solicitude of me friends

He came one morning into my room Sir, said he, with a great deal of agitation in his manner, a report is current about town, in which the whole monarchy is deeply interested it is said that Philip the Third has departed this life, and that the prince his son is actually seated on the throne To this it is added, that the cardinal duke of Lerma has lost the premiership, that he is even forbidden to appear at court, and that don Gaspard de Guzman, count of Olivarez, is actually at the head of the administration I felt a little agitated by this sudden change, without knowing why Scipio caught at this manifestation, and asked whether the veering of the wind in the political horizon might not blow me some good How is that possible? What good can it blow me, me worthy friend? answered I The court and I have shaken hands once for all the revolutions which may take place there are all alike indifferent to me

For a man at your time of life, replied that cunning son of a divmer, you are uncommonly mortified to all the uses of this world Under your circumstances me curiosity would be all alive I should go to Madrid and shew me face to the young monarch, just to see whether he would recollect it, merely for the amusement of the thing, I understand you,

said I you would have me return to court and try me fortune agam , or rather you would plunge me back into the gulph of avarice and ambition Why should such baleful passions any more take possession of your breast rejoined SciPlo Do not so much play the caluinniatoi on your own virtue I will answer for your firinness to yourself The sound moral reflections which your disgrace has occasioned you to make on the vanities of a court life, are a sufficient security against all the dangers to be feared form that quarter Embark boldly once agam upon an ocean, where you are acquamted with every shoal and rock in the dangerous navigation. Hold your tongue, you flatterer, said I with a smile of no very positive discouragement are you weary of seeing me lead a retired and tranquil life? I thought me repose had been more dear to you

Just at this period of our conversation, don CÆsar and his son came in They confirmed the news of the king's death, as well as the duke of Lerima's misfortune It appeared moreover that this minister, having requested permission to retire to Rome, had not been able to obtam it, but was ordered to confine himself to his maiquisate at Denia On this, as if they had been in league with me secretary, they advised me to go to Madrid and offer me congratulations to the new king, as one of his former acquamtances, with the merit of having rendeied him even such services, as the great are apt to re-

ward more willingly than some which are performed with cleaner hands For me part, said don Alphonso, I have no doubt but they will be liberally acknowledged Philip the Fourth is bound in honour to pay the prince of Spam's debts I consider the affair just in the same light as you do, said don CÆsar, and Santillane's visit to court will doubtless prove the occasion of his airiving at the very first employments

In good truth, me noble friends, exclaimed I, you do not consider what you are talking about It should seem, were one to give ear to the soothing words of you both, as if I had nothing to do but to shew me face at Madrid, and receive the key of office, or some foreign government for me pams but you are egregiously mistaken I am on the contrary well persuaded that the king would pass me over as a stranger, were I to throw myself in his way I will make the experiment if you wish it, merely for the sake of undeceiving you. The lords of Leyva took me at me word, so that I could not help pro-ising them to set out without loss of time for Madrid No sooner did me secretary perceive me mind fully made up to the prosecution of this journey, than his ecstacies were wound up to the highest pitch • he was satisfied within himself, that if I did but present me excellent person before the new monarch, he would immediately single me out form the crowd of political candidates, and weigh me down under a

load of dignities and emoluments On the strength of these conjectures, puffing himself out and amusing his fancy with the most splendid extravagances of device, he raised me up to the first offices of the state, and pushed forward his own preferment in the path of me exaltation

I therefore made me arrangements for returning to court, without the most distant intention of agam sacrificing at the shrme of fortune, but merely to convince don Caesar and his son of their error, in imagining that I was at all likely to ingratiate me-self with the sovereign It is true that there was some little lurking vanity at the bottoin of all me philosophy, sprouting up in the shape of a desire to ascertain, whether me royal master would throw away a thought on me, now in the spring time of his new and blushing honours Led out of me course solely by that teinpter, curiosity, without a dream of hope, or any practical contrivance for turning the new reign to me own individual advan\*tage, I set out for Madrid with Scipio, consigning the management of me household to Beatrice, who was well skilled in all the aits of domestic economy.

## CHAPTER II

*Gil Blas arrives in Madrid, and makes his appearance at court the king is blessed with a better meinyor than most of his courtiers, and recommends him to the notice of his prime ininister. Consequences of that recommendation*

WE got to Madnd in less than eight days, don Alphonso having given us two of his best horses, that we might lose no time on the road We alighted at a ready furnished lodging where I had lived formerly, kept by Vincent Fenero, me old landlord, who was uncommonly glad to see me agam

As this man prided himself on being in the secret of whatever was going forward either in court or city, I asked him after the best news There is plenty of it, whether best or worst, answered he. Since the death of Philip the Third, the friends and partisans of the cardinal duke of Lerma have been moving heaven and earth to support his emmence on the pinnacle of ministenal authority, but their efforts have been meffectual. the count of Olivarez has earned the day, in spite of all their industry It is alleged that Spam will be no loser by the exchange, and that the present premier is possessed of a genius so extensive, a mind so capacious, that he would be

competent to wield the machine of universal government New brooms, they say, sweep clean But at all events you may take this for certain, that the public is fully Impressed with a very favourable opinion of his capacity we shall see by and by whether the duke of Lerma's Situation is well or ill filled up. Feirero, having got his tongue into the right tram for wagging, gave me all the particulars of all the changes which had taken place at court, since the count of Olivarez had taken his seat at the helm of the state vessel

Two days after me arrival at Madrid, I repaired to the royal palace after me dinner, and threw myself in the king's way as he was crossing the lobby to his closet but his notice was not at all attracted by me appearance Next day, I returned to the same place, but with no better success On the third day he looked me full in the face as he passed by, but the stare was perfectly vacant, as far as me interest or me vanity was concerned This being the case, I resolved in me own mind what was proper to be done You see, said I to Scipio who accompanied me, that the king is grown out of me recollection ; or if his memory is not become more frail with the elevation of his circumstances, he has some private reasons for not choosing to renew the acquaintance I think we cannot do better than make our way back as fast as possible for Valencia. Let us not be in too great a hurry for that, sir, answered

me secretary. you know better than myself, having served a long apprenticeship, that there is no getting on at court without patience and perseverance Be indefatigable in exhibiting your person to the prince's regards by dint of forcing yourself on his observation, you will oblige him to ask himself the question who this assiduous frequenter of his haunts can possibly be, when memory must come to his aid, and trace the features of his cheapener in the purchase of the lovely Catahna's good graces.

That Scipio might have nothing to reproach me with, I so far lent myself to his wishes as to continue the same proceeding for the space of three weeks when at length it happened one day that the inonarch, noticing the frequency of me appearance, sent for me into his presence. I went into the closet, not without some perturbation of inind at the idefc of a private interview with me sovereign Who are you? said he your features are not altogether strange to me Where have I seen you ? Please your majesty, answered I trembling, I had the honour of escorting you one night with the count of Lemos to the house of .... Ah! I recollect it perfectly, cried the prince, as if a sudden light had broke in upon him; you were the duke of Lerina's secretary; and if I am not mistaken, your name is Santillane. I have not forgotten that on the occasion alluded to you served me with a most coinmendable zeal 5 but received a left-handed recom

pense for your exertions. Did you not get into prison at the conclusion of the adventure? Yes, please your majesty, replied I, me confinement in the tower of Segovia lasted six inonths, but your goodness was exeicised in procuring me release That, replied he, does not cancel me debt to me faithful servant Santillane it is not enough to have restored him to libeity, for I ought to make him ample amends for the evils which he has suffered on the score of his alacrity in me concerns.

Just as the prince was uttering these words, the count of Olivarez came into the closet. The nerves of favourites are shaken by every breath, their irritability excited by every trifle he was as much astonished as any favourite need be at the sight of a stranger in that place, and the king redoubled his wondering propensities by the following recommendation Count, I consign this young man to your care; einploy him, and let me find that you provide for his advancement The minister affected to receive this order with the most gracious acquiescence, but looked me over form head to foot, with a glance from the corner of his eye, and was on tenter-hooks to find out who had been so strangely saddled upon him. Go, me friend, added the sovereign addressing himself to me, and waving his hand for me to withdraw ; the count will not fail to avail himself of your services in a manner the most conducive to the in-

terests of me government, and the establishment of your own fortunes

I immediately went out of the closet and made the best of me way to the son of Coschna, who, being overrun with iimpatience to enquire what the king had been talking about, fumbled at his fingers' ends and was all over in an agitation His first question was whether we were to return to Valencia or become a part of the court. You shall forin your own conclusions, answered I, at the same time delighting him with an account word for word of the little conversation I had just held with the inonarch My dear master, said Scipio at once in the excess of his joy, will you take me for your almanac-maker another time? You must acknowledge that we were not in the wrong! the lords of Leyva and myself have our eye-teeth about us! a journey to Madrid was the only measure to be adopted in such a case Already I anticipate your appointment to an emment post' you will turn out to be some time or other a Caiderona to the count of Olivarez. That is by no mea«s the object of me ambition, observed I in return the einployment is placed on too rugged an emmence to excite any longings in me inind I could wish for a good situation where there could be no inducement to do what might go against me conscience, and where the favours of me prince are not likely to be bartered away for filthy lucrfc.

Having experienced me own unfitness for the possession of patronage, I cannot be sufficiently on me guard against the inroads of avarice and ambition. Never think about that, sir ' replied me secretary the ininister will give you some handsome appointment which you may fill without any iinpeachment of youi integrity or independence.

Induced more by Scrpio's iinportunity than me own curiosity, I repaired the following day before sunrise to the residence of the count d'Olivarez, having been informed that every morning, whether in summer or winter, he gave audience by candle-light to all comers. I ensconced myself inodestly in a corner of the saloon, and form me lurking place took especial notice of the count when he made his appearance, for I Had marked his person but cursorily in the king's closet. He was above the iniddle stature, and might pass for fat in a country where it is a rarity to see any but lean subjects. His should-eis were so high, as to look exactly as if he was huinp-backed, but appearances were slanderous: for his blade-bones, though melegant, were a pair his head, which was large enough to be capacious, diopped down upon his chest by the unwieldmess of its own weight his hair was black **and** unconscious of a curl, his face lengthened, his coinplexion olive-coloured, his inouth retiring inwards, with the sharp-pointed, turn-up chin of **a** pantaloon.

This whole arrangement of structure and symme-

try did not exactly make up the coinplete inodel of a nobleman according to the ideas of ancient art, nevertheless, as I believed him to be in a teinper of inind favourable to the gratification of me wishes, I looked at his defects with an indulgent eye, and found him a man very much to me satisfaction. One of the best points about him was, that he received the public at large with the utmost affability and complacency, holding out his hand for petitions with as much good humour as if he were the peison to be obliged, and this was a sufficient set off against any thing untoward in the expression of his countenance. In the mean time, when in me turn I came forward to pay me respects and make myself known to him, he darted at me a glance of rude dislike and frightful menace, then turning his back without condescending to give me audience, retired into his closet. Then it was that the ugliness of this nobleman's features appeared in all the extravagance, of caricature so that I made the best of me way out of the saloon, thunderstruck at so savage a leception, and quite at a loss how to conjecture what might be the consequence.

Having got back to Scipio, who was waiting for me at the door \* Can you guess at all, said I, what sort of a greeting mine was ? No! answered he not as to the ininute particulars; but with respect to the substance, easily enough: the ininister, ready upon all occasions to fall in with the fancies of his

royal master, must of course have made you a handsome offer of an ostensible and lucrative situation. That is all you know about the matter, replied I and then went on to acquaint him circumstantially with all that passed. He listened to me with serious attention, and then said. The count could not have recollected your person, or rather, he must have been deceived by a fortuitous resemblance between you and some impertinent suitor. I would advise you to try another interview, I will lay a wager, he will look on you more kindly. I adopted my secretary's suggestion, and stood for the second time in the presence of the minister, but he, behaving to me still worse than at first, puckered up his features the moment my unlucky countenance came within his ken, just as if it was connected with some lodged hate and certain loathing, which of force swayed him to offend, himself being offended, after this significant demonstration, he turned away his glaring eyeballs, and withdrew without uttering a word.

I was stung to the quick by so hostile a treatment, and in a humour to set out immediately on my return to Valentia; but to that project Scipio uniformly opposed his steady objections, not knowing how for the life of him to part with those flattering hopes which fancy had engendered in his brain. Do you not see plainly, said I, that the count wishes to drive me away from court? The monarch has testified in his presence some sort of favourable in-

tention towards me , and is not that enough to draw down upon me the thorough hatred of the monarch's favourite? Let us drive before the wind, me good comiade , let us make up our minds to put quietly into port, and leave the open sea and the honours of the flag in the possession of an enemy with whom we are too feeble to contend Sir, answered he in high resentment against the count of Olivarez, I would not stnke so easily I would go and coinplam to the king of the conteipt in which his ininister held his recommendation Bad advice indeed, me friend said I, to take so iinprudent a step as that, would soon bring bitter repentance in the tram of its consequences I do not even know whether it is safe for me to reinam any longer in this town

At this hint, me secretary communed a little with his own thoughts, and, considering that in point of fact we had to do with a man who kept the key of the tower of Segovia in his pocket, me fears became naturalized in his breast He no longer opposed me earnest desire of leaving Madrid, and I deter\*iniried to take me measures accordingly on the very next day

## CHAPTER III

*The project of retirement is prevented, and Joseph Navarro brought upon, the stage agam, by an act of signal service*

ON me way home to me lodging, I met Joseph Navarro, whom the reader will recollect as on the establishment of don Balthasar de Zuniga, and one of me old friends I made me bow fust at a distance, then went up to him, and asked whether he knew me agam, and if he would still be so good as to speak to a wretch who had repaid his friendship with ingratitude You acknowledge then, said he, that you have not behaved very handsomely by me ? Yes, answered I, and you are fully justified in laying on your reproaches thick and threefold I deserve them all, unless indeed me guilt may be thought to have been atoned by the remorse of conscience attendant on it. Since you have repented of your misconduct, replied Navarro einbracing me, I ought no longer to hold it in remeinbrance For me part, I knew not how to hug Joseph clog enough in me arins; and we both of us resumed our original kind feelings towards one another.

He had heard of me iinprisonment and the derangement of me affans; but of what followed he

was totally ignorant. I informed him of it; relating word for word my conversation with the king, without suppressing the minister's late ungracious reception of me, any more than my present purpose of retiring into my favourite obscurity. Beware of removing from the scene of action, said he since the sovereign has shewn a disposition to befriend you, there are always uses to be made of such a circumstance. Between ourselves, the count of Ohvarez has something rather unaccountable in his character he is a very good sort of nobleman, but rather whimsical withal some times, as on the present occasion, he acts in a most offensive manner, and none but himself can furnish a clue to disentangle the intricate thread of his motives and their results. But however this may be, or whatever reasons might have swayed him to give you so scurvy a reception, keep your footing here and do not budge, he will not be able to hinder you from thriving under the royal shelter and protection, take my word for that ' I will just give a hint upon the subject this evening to signor don Balthasar de Zuinga, my master; he is uncle to the count of Ohvarez, and shares with him in the toils and cares of office. Navarro having given me this assurance' enquired where I lived, and then we parted.

It was not long before we met again, for he came to call on me the very next day. Signor de Santillane, said he, you are not without a protectory

me master will lend you his powerful support on the strength of the good chaicter which I have given your lordship, he has proimised to speak to his nephew the count of Olivarez in your behalf, and I doubt not but he will effectually prepossess him in your favour My friend Navarro not meaning to serve me by halves, introduced me two days afterwards to don Balthasar, who said with a giacious air Signor de Santillane, your friend Joseph has pronounced your panegyric in terins which have won me over completely to your interest I made a low obeisance to signor de Zuinga, and answered, that to the latest period of me life I should enters tain the most lively sense of me obligation to Navarro, for having secured to me the protection of a ininister, who was considered, and that for the best reasons possible, as the presiding genius, the greater luinary, or as it were, the eye and inind of the ininisterial council. Don Balthasar, at this unexpected stroke of flattery, clapped me on the shoulder with an approving chuckle, and returned me coinpliment by a inote significant intiination: You may call on the count of OJivarez agam to-morrow, and then you will have more reason to be pleased with him.

For the third time, therefore, did I make me appearance before the pnme-iniinister, who picking me out form among the mob of suitors, cast upon me a look conveying .with it a simper of welcome, form

which I ventured to draw a good omen. This is all as it should be, said I to myself, the uncle has brought the nephew to his proper bearings. I no longer anticipated any other than a favourable reception, and me confidence was fully justified. The count, after having given audience to the proiniscuous crowd, took me with him into his closet, and said with a familiar address • My friend Santillane, you must excuse the little disquietude I have occasioned you merely foR me own amusement, it was done in sport, though it was death to you, for the sole purpose of practising on your discretion, and observing to what measuies your disgust and disappointment would incite you. Doubtless you must have concluded that your services were displeasing to me, but on the contrary, me good fellow, I must confess frankly, that as far as appears at present you are perfectly to me inind. Though the king me master had not enjoined me to take charge of your fortunes, I should have done so of me own free choice. Besides, me uncle don **Balthasar de Zuinga**, to whom I can refuse nothing, **has requested me to consider you as a man for whom he particularly interests himself: that alone would be enough to fix me confidence in you, and make me most sincerely your friend.**

This outset of me career produced so lively an impression on me feelings, that they became unintelligibly tuinultuous, I threw myself at the mi-

inster's feet, who insisted on me rising immediately, and then went on to the following effect Return hither to-day after dinner, and ask for me steward • he will acquaint you with the orders which I shall have given him. With these words his excellency broke up the conference to hear inass, according to his constant custom every day after giving audience he then attended the king's levee

#### CHAPTER IV

*Gil Blas ingratiates himself with the count of Ohvarex,*

I DID not fail returning after dinner to the prime inister's house, and asking for his steward, whose name was don Rayinond Capons No sooner had I made myself known, than paying his civilities to me in the most respectful manner, Sir, said he, follow me if you please: I am to do myself the honour of shewing you the way to the apartment which is ordered for you in this family. Having spoken thus, he led me up a narrow staircase to a gallery communicating v  
posed the second **story belonging to one wing of**

the house, and were furnished neatly, but without ostentation. You behold, resumed he, the lodging assigned you by his lordship, where you will always have a table for six persons, kept at his expense. You will be waited on by his own servants, and there will always be a carriage at your command\*. But that is not all. his excellency insisted on it in the most pointed manner, that you should be treated in every respect with the same attention as if you belonged to the house of Guzman.

What the devil is the meaning of all this? said I within myself. What construction ought I to put upon all these honours? Is there not some humorous prank at the bottom of it? and must it not be more in the way of diversion than any thing else, that the minister is flattering me up with so imposing an establishment? While I was fluctuating in this uncertainty, fluctuating between hope and fear, a page came to let me know that the count was asking for me. I waited instantly on his lordship, who was quite alone in his closet. Well! Santillane, said he, are you satisfied with your rooms, and with me orders to don Raynond? Your excellency's liberality, answered I, seems out of all proportion with its object; so that I receive it with fear and trembling. Why so? replied he. Can I be too lavish of distinction to a man whom the king has committed to me care, and for whose interests he especially commanded me to provide? No, that is

Impossible; and I do no more than my duty in placing you on a footing of respectability and consequence. No longer therefore let what I do for you be a subject of surprise, but rely on it that splendour in the eye of the world, and the solid advantages of accumulating wealth are equally within your grasp, if you do but attach yourself as faithfully to me as you did to the Duke of Lerina.

But now that we are on the subject of that nobleman, continued he, it is said that you lived on terms of personal intimacy with him, I have a strong curiosity to learn the circumstances which led to your first acquaintance, as well as in what department you acted under him. Do not disguise or gloss over the slightest particular; for I shall not be satisfied without a full, true, and circumstantial recital. Then it was that I recollected in what an embarrassing predicament I stood with the duke of Lerina on a similar occasion, and by what line of conduct I extricated myself, that same course I adopted once again with the happiest success: whereby the reader is to understand, that throughout my narrative, I softened down the passages likely to give umbrage to my patron, and glanced with a superficial delicacy over transactions, which would have reflected but little lustre on my own character, I likewise manifested a considerate tenderness for the duke of Lerina; though by giving that fallen favourite no quarter, I should better have

consulted the taste of him whom I wished to please. As for don Rodrigo de Calderona, there I laid about me with the religious fury of a bishop in a battle. I brought together, and displayed in the most glaring colours all the anecdotes I had been able to pick up respecting his corrupt practices, and under-hand dealing in the sale of promotions, military, ecclesiastical, and civil.

What you have told me about Calderona, cried the minister with eagerness, exactly squares with certain memoirs which have been presented to me, containing the heads of charges still more seriously affecting his character. He will very soon be put upon his trial, and if you have any wish to glut your revenge by his ruin, I am of opinion that the object of your desire is near at hand. I am far from thirsting after his blood, said I, though had it depended on him, mine might have been shed in the tower of Segovia, where he was the occasion of me taking lodgings for a pretty long time. What! enquired his excellency, was it don Rodrigo who procured you that sudden journey? this is a part of the story of which I was not aware before. Don Falcitas, to whom Navarro gave a summary of your adventures, told me indeed that the late king gave orders for your commitment, as a mark of his indignation against you for having led the prince of Spain astray, and taken him to a house of suspicious character in the night; but that is all I know

of the matter, and cannot for the life of me conjecture what part Calderona could possibly have had to play in that tragi-comedy. A principal part, whether on the stage or in real life, answered I that of a jealous lover, taking vengeance for an injury, sustained in the tenderest point. At the same time I related ininutely all the facts with which the reader is already acquainted, and touched his risible propensities, difficult as they were of access, so exactly in the right place, that he could not help wagging his under-hung jaw in a paroxysm of humour-stricken ecstasy, and laughing till he cried again. Catalina's double cast in the drama delighted him exceedingly; her some times playing the mecte and some times personating the grand-daughter seemed to tickle his fancy more than any thing • nor was he altogether inattentive to the appearance which the duke of Lerma made in this undignified farce of state.

When I had finished me story, the count gave me leave to depart with an assurance that on the next day he would not fail to make trial of me talents for busness. I ran immediately to the famdy hotel of Zuniga, to thank don Balthasar for his **good** offices, and to acquaint me friend Joseph with the favourable dispositions of die prime minister, **and** me brilliant prospects in consequence.

## CHAPTER V

*The 'private conversation of Gil Blas with Navarro, and his first einployment in the service of the count d'Olivarez*

As soon as I got to the ear of Joseph, I told him with much trepidation of spints what a world of topics I had to deposit in his private ear. He took me where we might be alone, when I asked hira, after having communicated a key to the whole transaction up to the present time, what he thought of the busness as it stood I think, answered he, that you are in a fair way to make an enorinous fortune. Every thing turns out according to your wishes. you have made yourself acceptable to the prime ininister, and what must be taken for something in the account, I can render you the same liervice as me uncle Melchior de la Ronda, when yqu attached yourself to the archiepiscopal establish. ment of Grenada. He spared you the trouble of finding out the weak side of that prelate and his principal officers, by discovering their different characters to you: and it is me purpose, after his example, to bang you perfectly acquainted with the count, his lady countess, and their only daughter, donna Maria de Guzman.

The minister's parts are quick, his judgment penetrating, and his talents altogether calculated for the formation of extensive projects. He affects the credit of universal genius, on the strength of a shewy smattering in general science, so that there is no subject, in his own opinion, too difficult to be decided on his mere authority. He sets himself up for a practical lawyer, a complete general, and a politician of thorough-paced sagacity. Add to all this that he is so obstinately wedded to his own opinions, as unchangeably to persevere in the path of his own chalking out, to the absolute contempt of better advice, for fear of seeming to be influenced by any good sense or intelligence, but what he would be thought to engross in the resources of his own mind. Between ourselves, this blot in his character may produce strange consequences, which it may be well for the monarchy, should indulgent heaven for the defect of human means avert! As for his talents in council, he shines in debate by the force of natural eloquence, and would write as well as he speaks, if he did not injudiciously affect certain dignity of style, which degenerates into affectation, quaintness, and obscurity. His modes of thinking are peculiar to himself; he is capricious in conduct, and visionary in design. Here you have the picture of his mind, the light and shade of his intellectual merits: the qualities of his heart and disposition remain to be delineated. He is generous,

and warm in his friendships. It is said that he is revengeful; but would he be a Spaniard, if he were otherwise? In addition to this, he has been accused of ingratitude, for having driven the duke of Uzeda and his son Lewis Aliaga into banishment, though he owed them, according to common report, obligations of the most binding nature, and yet even this must not be looked into so narrowly under his circumstances • there are few breasts capacious enough to afford room for two such opposite inmates as political ambition and gratitude.

Donna Agnes de Zuniga y Velasco, countess of Olivarez, continued Joseph, is a lady to whom it is impossible to impute more than one fault, but that is a huge one, for it consists in making a market, and a market the most exorbitant in its terms, of her natural influence over the mind of her husband. As for Donna Maria de Guzman, who beyond all dispute is at this moment the very first match in Spain, she is a lady of first-rate accomplishments, and absolutely idolized by her father. Regulate your conduct upon these hints. make your court with art and plausibility to these two ladies, and let it appear as if you were more devoted to the count of Olivarez than ever you were to the duke of Lerma before your forced excursion to Segovia. you will become a leading and powerful member of the administration.

I should advise you moreover, added he, to see

me master, don Balthasar, from time to time, for though you have no longer any occasion for his interest to push you forward, it will not be amiss to waste a little incense upon him. You stand very high in his good opinion preserve your footing there, and cultivate his friendship, it may stand you in some stead on any emergency I could not help observing, that as the uncle and nephew were in a certain sort partners in the government of the state, there might possibly be some little symptom of jealousy between brothers near the throne On the contrary, answered he, they are united by the most confidential ties Had it not been for don Balthasar, the count of Olivarez might probably never have been prime minister, for you are to know, that after Philip the Third had paid the debt of nature, all the adherents and partisans belonging to the house of Sandoval made a great stir, some in favour of the cardinal, and others on his son's behalf, but me master, a greater adept in court intrigue than any of them, and the count, who is nearly as great an adept as himself, disconcerted all their measures, and took their own so judiciously for the purpose of stepping into the vacant place, that then rivals had no chance against them The count of Olivarez, being appointed prime minister, divided the duties with his uncle, don Balthasar; leaving foreign affairs to him, and taking the home department to himself. the consequence is, that the bonds of fist-

mily friendship are drawn closer between these two noblemen, than if political influence had no share in their mutual interests they are perfectly independent in their respective lines of business, and live together on terms of good understanding which no intrigue can possibly affect or alter

Such was the substance of me conversation with Joseph, and the advantage to be derived from it was me own to make the most of at all events it was me duty to thank signor de Zuniga, for all the influence he had the goodness to exert in me favour. He assured me with infinite good-breeding that he should avail himself of every opportunity as it arose to promote ray wishes, and that he was very glad his nephew had behaved so as to meet me ideas, because he meant to refresh his memory in me behalf, being determined, as he was pleased to say, to place it beyond all manner of doubt how far he himself participated in all me views, and to make it evident that, instead of one fast friend, I had two. In terms like these did don Balthasar, through mere friendship for Navarro, take the moulding of me fortunes on himself.

On that same evening did I leave me paltry lodging to take up me abode at the prime minister's, where I sat down to supper with Scipio in me own suite of apartments. There were we both waited on by the servants belonging to the household, who as they stood behind our chairs, while we were affect-

ing the pomp and circumstance of political elevation, were more likely than not to be laughing in their sleeves at the pantomme they had been ordered by their manager to play in our presence. When they had taken away and left us to ourselves, me secretary, being no longer under restraint, gave vent to a thousand wild Imaginations which his sprightly temper and inventive hopes engendered in his fancy. On me part, though by no means cold or insensible to the brilliant prospects which were opening on me view, I did not as yet yield in the least degree to the weakness of being thrust aside from the right line of me philosophy by temporal allurements. So much otherwise, that on going to bed, I fell into a sound sleep, without being haunted in me dreams by those phantoms of flattering delusion, which might have gained admittance with no severe question from a corruptible door-keeper. The ambitious Scipio, on the contrary, tossed and tumbled all night in the agitation of restless contrivance. Whenever he dozed, a little Imp took possession of his brain, with a pen behind its ear, working out by all the rules of arithmetic the bulky sum total of his daughter Seraphima's marriage portion.

No sooner had I got me clothes on the next morning, than a message came from his lordship. I flew like lightning at the summons, when his excellency said: Now then I Santillane, suppose you give

us a specimen of your talents for business. You say that the duke of Lerma used to give you state papers to bring into official form; and I have one by way of experiment, on which you shall try your skill. The subject you will easily comprehend: it turns upon an exposition of public affairs, such as to throw an artificial light on the first appearance of the new ministry, and to prejudice the public in its favour. I have already whispered it about by me emissaries, that every department of the state was completely disorganized, that the talents which preceded us were no talents at all, and the object at present is to Impress both court and city by a formal declaration with the idea, that our and is absolutely necessary to save the monarchy itself from sinking. On this theme you may expatiate, till the populace become lock-jawed with astonishment, and the sober part of the public are gravely argued out of all prepossession in favour of the discarded party. By way of contrast, you will talk of the *dignus vindice nodus*, taking care to translate it into Spanish; and boast of the measures adopted under the new order of things, to secure the permanent glory of the king's reign, to give perpetual prosperity to his dominions, and to confer perfect, unchangeable happiness on his good people.

His lordship, having given out the general subject of me thesis, left with me a paper containing the heads of charges, whether just or unjust, against

the late adinistration: and I remember perfectly well, that there were ten articles, whose lightest word, even of the lightest article, would harrow up the soul of a true Spaniard, and make his knotted and combined locks to part. That the current of me fancy might experience no interruption, he shut me into a little closet near his own, where the spirit of poetry might possess me in all its freedom and independence. My best faculties were called forth, to compose a statement of affairs commensurate with me own concern in the sweeping of the new brooms. My first object was to lay open the nakedness and abandonment of the kingdom; the finances in a state of bankruptcy, the civil list **and** immediate resources of the crown pawned fifty times over, the navy unpaid, dismantled, and in mutiny. All this hideous delneation was referred for its justice and accuracy to the wrongheadedness and stupidity of government at the close of the last reign, and the doctrme most strongly enforced, that unexampled wisdom and patriotisin only could ward off the fatal consequences. In short, the monarchy could only be sustamed on the shoulders of our political sufficiency and reforming prudence. The ex-inistry were so cruelly belaboured, that the duke of Lerina's ruin, according to the terins of me syllogism, was the salvation of Spam. To own the truth, though me professions were in the spirit of christian chanty towards that nobleman, I was not

Sorry to give him a sly rub in the exercise of me function. Oh man! man' what a compound of candour-breathing satire and splenetic impartiality art thou!

Towards the conclusion, having finished my frightful portraiture of overhanging evils, I endeavoured to allay the storin me art had raised by making futurity as bright as the past had been gloome. The count of Olivarez was brought in at the close, like the tutelary deity of an ancient coinonwealth in the crisis of its fate: I proimised more than paganisin ever feigned, or chivalry fancied in the wildest of its crusading projects. In a word, I so exactly executed what the new ininister meant, that he seemed not to know his own hints agam, when drawn out in me emphatic and appropriate language. Santillane, said he, do you know that this is more like the compositionone might expect from a secretary of state, than like that of a private secretary? I can no longer be surprised that the duke of Lerina was fond of calling your talents into action. Your style is concise, and by no means melegant; but it creeps rather too much in the level paths of nature. At the same time, pointing out the passages which did not hit his fancy, he corrected them; and I gathered form the touches he threw in, that Navarro was right in saying he affected sententious wit, but inistook for it quamt and stale conceits. Nevertheless, though he pre\*

ferred the stately, or rather the grotesque in writing, he suffered two thirds of me performance to stand without alteration, and, by way of proving how entirely he was satisfied, sent me three hundred pistoles by don Raymond after dinner.

## CHAPTER VI.

*The application of the three hundred pistoles, and Scipio's commission connected with them Success of the state paper mentioned in the last chapter.*

THIS handsome present of the minister furnished Scipio with a new subject of congratulation, by reason of our second appearance at court You may remark, said he, that fortune is preparing a load of aggrandisement to lay on your lordship's shoulders. Are you still sorry for having turned your back on solitude? May die count of Olivarez live for ever he is a very different sort of a master from his predecessor The duke of Lerina, with all your devotion to his service, left you to live upon suction for months without a pistole to bless yourself with; and the count has already made you a present which you

could have had no reason to expect but after a course of long service

I should very much like, added he, that the lords of Leyva should be witnesses of your great success, or at least that they should be informed of it. It is high time indeed, answered J, and I meant to speak with you on that subject. They must doubtless be impatient to hear of me proceedings, but I waited till my fate was fixed, and till I could decide for certain whether I should stay at court or not. Now that I am sure of my destination, you have only to set out for Valencia whenever you please, and to acquaint those noblemen with my present situation, which I consider as their doing, since it is evident, that but for them, I should never have resolved on my journey to Madrid. My dear master, cried the son of Boheimian accident, what joy shall I communicate by relating what has happened to you! Why am I not already at the gates of Valencia? But I shall be there forthwith. Don Alphonso's two houses are ready in the stable. I shall take one of my lord's livery servants with me. Besides ~~copy~~ is pleasant on the well the effect of official parade, in making impression on the natives of a provincial town.

I could not help laughing at my secretary's foolish vanity; and yet, with vanity perhaps more than equal to his own, I left him to do as he pleased. Go about your business, said I, and make the best of

your way back, for I have another commission to give you I mean to send you to the Asturias with some money for me mother. Through neglect I have suffered the time to elapse when I promised to reinit her a hundred pistoles, and pledged you to make the payment in person Such engagements ought to be held sacred by a son, and I reproach myself with inaccuracy in the observance of mine Sir, answered Scipio, within six weeks I shall bring you an account of both your commissions, having opened me budget to the lords of Leyva, looked in at your country-house, and taken a peep at the town of Oviedo, the recollection of which I cannot admit into me mind, without turning over three-fourths of the inhabitants, and one-half of the remaining quarter, to the corrective discipline of that infernal executions, who is supposed to be kept on foot for the purpose of castigating sinners I then counted down one hundred pistoles to that same son of a wandering inother for me honoured parents' annuity, and another hundred for himself; meaning that he should perform his long journey without grumbling on me account by the way

Some days after his departure his lordship sent our memorial to press; and it was no sooner published than it became the topic of conversation in every circle throughout Madrid. The people, enamoured of novelty, took up this well-written statement of their own wretchedness with fond partiality;

the derangement and exhaustion of the finances<sup>^</sup> pampered with a inixture of truth and poetry, excited a strong feeling of popular indignation against the duke of Lerina, and if these paper bullets of the biam, cast in the political arinoury of a rival, failed to carry victory with them in the opinions of all mankind, they were at all events hailed with triuinph by the most clamorous of our own partisans. As for the inagnificent proimises which the count of Olivarezthrew in, and among others that of keep\* ing the inachme of state in inotion, by a systein of econome, without adding to the public burdens, they were caught at with avidity by the citizens at large, and considered as pledges of an enlightened and patriotic policy, so that the whole city resounded with the acclamation of panegyric and congratulation on the opening of new prospects

The ininister, delighted to have gamed his end so easily, which in that publication had only been to draw popularity upon himself, was now determmed to seize the substance as well as catch at the shadow, by an act of unquestionable credit with the subject, and high utility to the king's service For that purpose, he had recouise to the einperor Galba's contrivance, Consisting in a forced regurgitation of ill-gotten spoils form individuals, who had made large fortunes, hell and their own consciences knew best how, in the superintendence of the royal expenditure. When he had squeezed these sponges

till they were dry agam, and had filled the king's coffers with the dramings, he undertook to render the reform permanent by abolishing all pensions, not excepting his own, and curtailing the gratuities too frequently bestowed on favourites out of the prince's privy purse. To succeed in this design, which he could not carry into effect without changing the face of the government, he charged me with the composition of a new state paper, furnishing the substance and the form from his own idea. He then advised me to raise me style as much as possible above the level of me ordinary siimplicity, and to give an air of more eloquence to me phraseology. A hint is sufficient, me lord, said I, your excellency wishes to unite subliinity with illuination, and it shall be so. I shut myself up in the same closet where I had already worked so successfully, and sat down stiffly to me task, first calling to me aid the lofty and clear perceptions, the noble and sonorous expressions of me old instructor, the archbishop of Gienada.

I began by laying it down as a first maxim of political philosophy, that the vital functions, the respiration as it were of all inonarchy, depended on the strict adinistration of the fmances; that in our particular case, that duty became iimperiously urgent, irresistibly pressing on our consciences; and that the revenue should be considered as the neives and smews of Spam, to hold her rivals in check and

keep her enemies in awe. After this general declamation, I pointed out to the sovereign, for to him the memorial was addressed, that by cutting down all pensions and perquisites dependent on the ordinary income, he would not thereby deprive himself of that truly royal pleasure, a princely munificence towards those of his subjects who had established a fair claim to his favours; because without drawing upon his treasury, he had the means of distributing more acceptable rewards that for one branch of service, there were viceroalties, lieutenantcies, Orders of merit, and all sorts of military commissions, for another, high judicial situations with salaries annexed, civil offices of magistracy with sounding titles to give them consequence; and though last not least, all the temporal possessions of the church to animate the piety of its spiritual pastors.

This memorial, which was much longer than the first, occupied me nearly three days; but as luck would have it, my performance was exactly to my master's mind, who finding it written with sententious cogency, and bristled up with metaphors in the declamatory parts, complimented me in the highest terms. That is vastly well expressed indeed! said he, laying his finger on a passage here and there, and picking out all the most inflated sentences he could find: that language bears the stamp of fine composition, and might pass for the production of a classic. Courage, my friend! I

foresee that your services will be worth their weight in gold And yet, notwithstanding the applauses he lavished on me classical coinposition, a few of his own heightening touches, he thought, would make it read still better He put a good deal of his own stuff into it, and the medley was manufactuied into a piece of eloquence which was considered as unanswerable by the king and all the court. The whole city joIned in opinion with the higher orders, denying the most flattering hopes of the futuie form these grand proimises, and concluding that the monarchy must recover its pristme splendour dunnng the ministry of so illustrious a character. His excellency, finding that me sermon on econome was fraught with practical inferences of utility to him, was kind enough to wish that I should profit by the exercise of me own talents. In conformity therefore with his new system of patronage, he gave me an annuity of five hundred crowns on the commandery of Castle, and the acceptance of it was so much the more palatable, as no dirty work had been done for it, but it was honestly, though cheaply earned,

## CHAPTER VII.

*Gil Bias meets with his friend Fabricio once more ;  
the accident, place, and circumstances described,  
with the particulars of their conversation together*

NOTHING gave his lordship greater pleasure than to hear the general decision of Madrid on the conduct of his administration. Not a day passed but he enquired what they were saying of him in the political world. He kept spies in pay, to bring him an exact account of what was going on in the city. They particularised the most trivial discourses which they overheard, and their orders being to suppress nothing, his self-love was grazed now and then, for the people have a way of bolting out home truths, without any nice calculation where they may glance.

Finding that the count loved political small talk, I made it me business to frequent places of public resort after dinner, and to chime in with the conversation of genteel people whenever opportunity offered. Should the measures of government happen to be canvassed among them, I pricked up my ears and greedily took in their discourse; if any thing worth repeating was said, his excellency was sure to hear of it. It can scarcely be necessary to

hint, that I never carried home any thing which was not likely to pay for the portorage.

One day, returning from one of these little conversational parties, the road lay in front of a hospital. It occurred to me to go in. I walked through two or three wards, filled with diseased patients, and examined their beds to see that they were properly taken care of. Among these unhappy wretches, whom I could not look at without the most painful feelings, I observed one whose features struck me : it surely could be no other than Fabricio, the countryman and chuin! To look at him more closely, I drew near his bedside, and finding beyond a possibility of doubt that it was the poet Nunez, I stopped to look at him for a few seconds without saying a word. He also fixed his regards on me. At length breaking silence. Do not my eyes deceive me said I Is it indeed Fabricio, and here ? It is indeed, answered he, coldly, and you need not wonder at it. Since we parted, I have been working indefatigably at the trade of an author: I have written novels, plays, and works of genius in every department. My brain is fairly spun out, and here I am.

I could not help laughing at such a sketch of literary biography; and still more at the serious air of the accompanying action. What! cried I, has your muse brought you to this pass ? Has she played you, Such a jade's trick: as this? even as you witness, answered he; this establishment is a

sort of half-pay receptacle for invalids on the muster-roll of disabled wit. You have acted discreetly, me good friend, to lay yourself out for promotion in a different line. But they tell me, you are no longer a courtier, and that your prospects in political life were all blasted; nay, they went so far as to affirm that you were committed to close custody by the king's order. They told you no more than the truth, replied I the delightful vision of political emmence wherein you left me last, soon shifted the scene of me incoherent dreams to a prison and complete destitution. But for all that, me friend, here you behold me agam in a better plight than ever. That is quite out of the question, said Nunez your deportment is discreet and decent, you have not that supercilious and devil-take-the-hindmost sort of aspect, which good keep communicates to the human face. The reverses of this chequered life, replied I, have brought me down to the level of the more inodest virtues; I have taken a lesson in the school of adversity, to enjoy the possession of a good stud without riding the great horse.

Tell me then candidly, cried Fabncio, raising his head upon hts hand with his elbow upon the pillow, what your present occupation can possibly be. A steward perhaps to some nobleman out at elbows, or man of busness to some rich widow! Something better than either the one or the other, rejoined I, but excuse me form saying more at present: another

time your curiosity shall be satisfied It is enough at present to assure you that me means are equal to me inclination, and that you may command independence through me; but then you must subinit to an embargo on your wit, and a non-intercourse act between you and the faculty of writing, whether in verse or prose. Can you make this sacrifice to me friendship<sup>9</sup> I have already made it to the powers above, said he, in me last critical sickness. A Doininican made me forswear poetry, as an amusement bordering on criininality, but at all events beside the turnpike-road of good sense I wish you joy, me deai Nunez, replied I; but beware of a revoke. There is not the least danger on that head, rejoined he. the Muses and I have agreed on terins of separation. just as you came in at that door, I was conning over a farewell ode. Good master Fabncio, said I, with a wise swagging to and fro of me head, it is a doubtful question whether your vow of abjuration ought to pass current with the Doininican and myself: you seein over head and ears in love with those virgins incarnate. No no, contended he peevishly, I have cut the connection asunder. Nay more, I have quarrelled with their keepers, the public. The readers of these **days do not deserve an** author of .more genius **than themselves: I should be sorry to write down to their coinprehension-** You are Hot to suppose that this is the language otdugust; it is me,sincere and

well-weighed opinion. Applause and hisses are just the same to me! It is a toss up who fails and who succeeds. the wit of to-day is the blockhead of to-morrow. What cursed fools our dramatists must be, to care for any thing but their poundage when their plays happen to be received It is all very well for a few nights! But only fancy a revival at the end of twenty years, and what a figure they will cut then' The audiences of the present day turn up their noses at the stock pieces of the last age, and it is a question whether their taste will fare better with their more critical descendants If that conjecture be probable, the inventors of clap-traps now will be the but of cat-calls hereafter It is just the same with novel writers, and all other manufactures of unnecessary literature they strut and fret for an hour, and then are no more seen or heard of The glories of successful authorship are the mere vapours of a murky atmosphere, meteors of a inarsh, foul coruscations of a dunghill, cathedral tapers to put out the galaxy, blue flames of coarse paper held over a candle.

Though these caricatures of rival renown were the mere creations of jealousy in the poet of the Asturias, it was not me business to correct his ill temper. I am delighted, said I, that wit and you have had so serious a quarrel; and that the diarrhoea of your inventive faculties has been cured by an astringent. You may depend on it, I will put

you in the way of a good livelihood, without drawing deep upon your intellectual credit So much the better, cried he, wit smells like carrion in me nostrils, or rather like a pungent and deleterious perfume, fragrant to the sense, but corrosive to the vitals I heartily wish, me dear Fabucio, resumed I, that you may always keep in that inind Only wash youi hands completely of poetry, and you may depend on it, I will enable you to keep your head above water without picking or stealing. In the mean while, added I, slipping a purse of sixty pistoles into his hand, accept this as a slight instance of me regard.

O friend like the friends in days of yore, cried the son of barber Nunez, out of his wits with joy and gratitude, it was heaven itself which sent you into this hospital, whence your goodness is now discharging me! Before we parted, I gave him me address, and invited him to come and see me as soon as his health would perinit He opened his eyes as an oyster does its shell, when I told him that I lodged under the minister's roof O illustrious Oil Bias' said he, great as Poinpey and fortunate as Sylla, whose lot it is to be hand in glove with the dictators of inodern tunes 1 I rejoice most disinterestedly in your good fortune, because it is so very evident what a noble use you make of it

## CHAPTER VIII

*Gil Blas gets forward progressively in his master's affections. Scipw's return to Madrid, and account of his journey.*

THE count of Olivarez, whom I shall henceforward call me lord duke, because the king was pleased to confer that dignity on him about this time, was infested with a weakness which I did not suffer to pass without taking toll it was a furious desire of being beloved. The moment he fancied that any one really liked him, his heart was caught in a trap This was not lost upon me keen sense of character. It was not enough to do precisely as he ordered, I superadded a zeal in the execution which made him mme I laid myself out to his liking in every thing, and provided beforehand for his most eccentric wishes.

By conduct like this, which almost always answers, I became by degrees me master's favourite; and he, on the other hand, as if he had got round to me blind side also, wormed himself into me affections, by giving me his own. So forward did I get into his good graces, as to halve his confidence with signor Carnero, his principal secretary.

Carnero had played me game; and that so success\*

fully, as to be entrusted with the greater mesteries. We two therefore were the keepers of the prime minister's conscience, and held the keys of all his secrets with this difference, that Carnero was consulted on state affairs, myself about his private concerns, dividing the busness into two separate departments; and we were each of us equally pleased with our own. We lived together without jealousy, and certainly without attachment I had every reason to be satisfied with me quarters, where continual intercourse gave me an opportunity of prying into the duke's inmost soul, which was a inasked battery to all mankind beside, but plam as it pike-staff to me, when he no longer questioned the sincerity of me attachment to him.

Santillane, said he one day, you were witness to the duke of Lerina's possession of an authority, more like that of an absolute monarch than a favourite minister \* and yet I am still happier than he was at the very summi of his good fortune. He had two formidable enemies in his own son, the duke of Uzeda, and in the confessor of Philip the Third: but there is no one now about the king who has credit enough to stand in me way, or even, as I am aware, the slightest inclination to do me mischief.

It is true, continued he, that on me accession to the ministry, it **was** me first care to remove all hangers-on form about the prince but those of me

own family or connections. By means of viceroyalties or embassies I got rid of all the nobility who, by their personal merit, could have interfered with me in the good graces of the sovereign, whom I mean to engross entirely to myself, so that I may say at the present moment, no statesman of the time holds me in check by the ascendancy of his personal influence. You see, Gil Bias, I open my mind to you. As I have reason to think that you are mine heart and soul, I have chosen to put you in possession of every thing. You are a clever youth, with reflection, penetration, and discretion in short, you are just the very creature to acquit yourself of all possible little offices in all possible directions; you are also a young fellow of very promising parts, and must in the nature of things be in my interests.

There was no standing the attack which these flattering representations were calculated to make upon the weakly defended fortress of my philosophy. Unauthorised whims of avarice and ambition mounted suddenly into my head, and brought forward certain sentiments of political speculation which were supposed to have been in abeyance. I gave the minister an assurance that I should fulfil his intentions to the utmost of my power, and held myself in readiness to execute without examination or inference all the orders it might be his pleasure to give me,

While I was thus disposed to take fortune in her affable fit, Scipio returned from his peregrination. I have no long story for you, said he. The lords of Leyva were delighted at your reception from the king, and at the manner in which the count of Olivarez and you came to understand one another.

My friend, said I, you would have delighted them still more, had you been able to tell them on what a footing I am now with me lord. My advances since your departure have been prodigious. Happy man be his dole, me dear master, answered he me mind forebodes that we shall cut a figure

Let us change the subject, said I, and talk of Oviedo. You have been in the Asturias. How did you leave me mother? Ah' sir, replied he, with an undertaker's decency of countenance, I have a melancholy tale to tell you from that quarter O heaven! exclaimed I, me in other then is dead! Six months since, said me secretary, did the good lady pay the debt of nature, and your uncle, signor Gil Perez, about the same period

My mother's death preyed upon me susceptible nature, though in me childhood I had not received from her those little fondling indications of maternal love, so necessary to amalgamate with the more serious convictions of filial duty The good canon too came in for his share in me lacrymal libations, for his great care in bugging me up according to the rules of godhness and honesty My serious grief

was not lasting: but I never lost sight of a certain tender recollection, whenever the idea of me dear relations shot across me mind.

## CHAPTER IX

*How me lord duke inarried his only daughter, and to whom with the bitter consequences of that marriage.*

VERY shortly after the son of Cosclina's return, me lord duke fell into a brown study, and it lasted a complete week I conceived of course that he was brooding over some great measure of government, but family concerns were the object of his musings Gil Bias, said he one day after dinner, you may perceive that me mind is a good deal distracted. Yes, me good friend, I am pondering over an affair of the utmost consequence to me feelings. you shall know all about it

My daughter, donna Maria, pursued he, is marriageable, and of course beset with suitors The count de Niebles, eldest son of the duke de Medina Sidonia, head of the Guzman family, and don Lewis de Haro, eldest son of the marquis de Carpio and

me eldest sister, are the two most likely competitors. The latter in particular is superior in point of merit to all his rivals, so that the whole court has fixed on him for me son-in-law. Nevertheless, without entering into private motives for treating him, as well as the count de Nibbles, with a refusal, me present views are fixed upon don Ramires Nunez de Guzman, marquis of Toral, head of the Guzmans d'Abrados, another branch of the family. To that nobleman and his progeny by me daughter I mean to leave all me property, and to entail on them the title of count d'Olivarez, with the additional dignity of grandee, so that me grandchildren and their descendants, issue of the Abrados and Olivarez branch, will be considered as taking precedence in the house of Guzman.

Tell me now, Santillane, added he, do you not like me project? Excuse me, me lord, pleaded I, with a shrug, the design is worthy of the genius which gave birth to it me only fear is, lest the duke of Medina Sidoina should think fit to be out of huinour at it. Let him take it as he list, resumed the minister; I give myself very little concern about that. His branch is no favourite with me: they have choused that of Abrados out of their precedence and many of their privileges. I shall be for less affected by his ill humours, than by the disappointment of me sister, the marchioness de Carpio, *When she sees me daughter slip through her son's*

fingers. But let that be as it may, I am determined to please myself, and don Ramires shall be the man - it is a settled point.

My lord duke, having announced this firm resolve, did not carry it into effect without giving a new proof of his singular policy. He presented a memorial to the king, entreating him and the queen in concert, to do him the honour of taking the choice of a husband for his daughter on themselves, at the same time acquainting them with the pretensions of the suitors, and professing to abide by their election: but he took care, when naming the marquis de Toral, to evince clearly whither his own wishes pointed. The king therefore, with a blind deference for his minister, answered thus " I think that don Ramires Nunez deserves donna Mana but determine for yourself The match of your own choosing will be most agreeable to me "

(Signed)

THE KING.

The minister made a point of shewing this answer every where. and, affecting to consider it as a royal mandate, hastened his daughter's marriage with the marquis de Toral; a death-blow to the hopes of the marchioness de Carpio, and the rest of the Guzmans who had been speculating on an alliance with donna Maria. These rival players of a losing game, not being able to break off the match, put the best face they could upon it, and made the fashionable world

to lesound with their costly celebrations of the event A superficial observer might have fancied that the whole family was delighted with the airangements but the pouters and ill-wishers were soon revenged most cruelly at me lord duke's expense Donna Maria was brought to bed of a daughter at the end of ten months, the infant was still-born, and the mother died a few days afterwards

What a loss for a father who had no eyes, as one may say, but for his daughter, and in her loss felt the miscarriage of his design, to quash the right of precedence in the branch of Medina Sidonia! Stung to the quick by his misfortune, he shut himself up for several days, and was visible to no one but myself, a sincere syinpathizer, form the recollection of me own experience, in his soriow. The occasion drew forth fresh tears to Antonia's memory The death of the marchioness de Toral, under circumstances so similai, tore open a wound imperfectly skinned over, and so exasperated me affliction, that the minister, though he had enough to do with his own sufferings, could not help taking notice of mine. It seemed unaccountable, how exactly his feelings were echoed. Gil Bias, said he one when me tears seemed to feed upon indulg|. me greatest consolation consists in having a "bosom friend so much alive to all me distresses Ah' me lord, answered I, giving him the full credit of me Amiable tenderness, I must be ungrateful and de-

generate in me nature, if I did not lament as for myself. Can I be aware that you mourn over a daughter of accomplished merit, whom you loved so tenderly, without shedding tears of fellow feeling No, me lord, I am too much naturalized to you on the side of obligation, not to take a permanent interest in all your pleasures and disappointments

## CHAPTER X.

*Oil Bias meets with the poet Nunez by accident, and learns that he has written a tragedy, which is on the point of being brought out at the theatre royal The all fortune of the piece, and the good fortune of its author.*

T H E minister began to pick up his crumbs,, and myself consequently to get into feather again, when one evening I went out alone in the carriage to take an airng. On the road I met the poet of the Asturias and bad been lost to me knowledge ever since his discharge form the hospital. He was very decently dressed. I called him up, gave him a seal in me carriage, and we drove together to Saint Jerome's meadow

Master Nunez, said I, it is lucky for me to have met you accidentally; for otherwise I should not have had the pleasure... No severe speeches, Santillane, interrupted he with considerable eagerness. I must own frankly that I did not mean to keep up your acquaintance, and I will tell you the reason. You promised me a good situation, provided I abjured poetry; but I have found a very excellent one, on condition of keeping me talents in constant play. I accepted the latter alternative, as squaring best with me own humour. A friend of mine got me an employment under don Bertrand Gomez del Ribero, treasurer of the king's galleys. This don Bertrand, wanting to have a wit in his pay, and finding me turn for poetical composition very much in unison with his own sense of what is excellent, has chosen me in preference to five or six authors who offered themselves as candidates for the place of his private secretary

I am delighted at the news, me dear Fabneio, said I, for this don Bertrand must be very rich. Rich indeed! answered he they say that he does not know himself how much he is worth. However that may be, me busness under him is as follows. He prides himself on his turn for gallantry, at the same time wishing to pass for a man of genius: he therefore keeps up an epistolary intercourse of wit with several ladies who have an infinite deal, and borrows me bram to indite such letters as may

amplify the opinion of his sprightliness and elegance I write to one for him in verse, to another in prose, and some times carry the letters myself, to prove the agility of me heels as well as the ingenuity of me head

But you do not tell me, said I, what I most want to know Are you well paid for your epigrammatic cards of compliment Yes, most plentifully, answered he. Rich men are not always open-handed, and I know some who are downright curmudgeons; but don Bertrand has behaved in the most handsome manner Besides a salary of two hundred pistoles, I receive some little occasional perquisites from him, sufficient to set me above the world, and enable me to live on an equal footing with some choice spurts of the literary circles, who are willing, like myself, to set care at defiance But then, resumed I, has your treasurer critical skill enough to distinguish the beauties of a performance from its blemishes? The least likely man in the world, answered Nunez • a flippant-tongued sinatterer, with a miserable assortment of materials for judging Yet he gives himself out for chief justice and lord president of Apollo's tribunal. His decisions are adventurous, if not always lucky; while his opinions are inamptained in so high a tone and with so bullying a challenge of infallibility, that nine times out of ten the issue of an argument is silence, though not conviction, on the part of the opponent, as a measure of precaution

against the gathering storm of foul language and contemptuous sneers

You may readily suppose, continued he, that I take especial care **new** to contradict him, though it almost exceeds human patience to forbear; for to say nothing of the unpalatable phrases that might be hailed down on Wy defenceless head, I should stand a very good chance of being shoved by the shoulders out of doors. I therefore am discreet enough to approve what he praises, and to condemn Without mitigation or appeal whatever he is pleased to find fault with. By this easy coinpliance, for poets are compelled to acquire a knack of knocking under to those by whom they live, not even excepting their booksellers, I have, gamed the esteem and friendship of me patron, He has employed me to write a tragedy on a plot of his own. I have executed it under his inspection; and if the piece succeeds, a per centage on the land and honour must accrue to him.

I asked our poet what was the title of his tragedy. He informed me that it was, " The Count of Saldagna; **and** that it would come out in two or three days. I told him that I wished it all possible success **and** thought so favourably of his genius as to considerable hopes. So do I, said he but he tells a more Battering tale, than in the **a drawiatic** author. You might as well at the nailing the weathercock a

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**M**

speculate on the reception of a new piece with an audience.

At length, the day of performance arrived. I could not go to the play, being prevented by official business. The only thing to be done was to send Scipio, that he might bring me back word how it went off; for I was sincerely interested in the event. After waiting impatiently for his return, in he came with a long face which boded no good. Well! said I, how was "The Count of Saldagna" welcomed by the critics? Very roughly, answered he: never was there a play more brutally handled; I left the house in high anger at the injustice and insolence of the pit. It serves him right, lejomed I. Nunez is no better than a madman, to be always running his head against the stone walls of a theatre. If he was in his senses, could he have preferred the hisses and catcalls of an unfeeling mob, to the ease and dignity he might have commanded under me patronage? Thus did I inveigh with friendly vehemence against the poet of the Astunas, and disturb the even tenor of me mind for an event, which the suflerer hailed with joy, and inserted among the well-omened particulars of his journal

He came to see me within two days, and appeared in high spints. Santillane, cried he, I am come to receive your congratulations. My fortune is made, me friend, though me play is marred. You know what a mistake they made on the first **and** last night

of " The Count of Saldagna •" hissed instead of applauding<sup>1</sup> You would have thought all the wild beast of the forest had been let loose, with their ears fortified against the softening power of poetry • but the more they bellowed, the better I fared, and they have roared me into a provision for life.

There was no knowing what to make of this incident in the drama of our poet's adventures. What is all this, Fabrcto? said I: how can theatrical damnation have conjured up such elysian ecstasy It is exactly so, answered he • I told you before that don Bertrand had thrown in some of the circumstances ; and he was fully convinced that there was no defect but in the taste of the spectators. They might be very good judges; but, if they were, he was no judge at all Nunez 1 said he this morning;

*Victnx causa Dus placuit, sed victa Catoni*

Your piece has been ill received by the public; but against that you may place me entire approbation; and thus you ought to set your heart at rest By

Meinbers of parliament, and the ladies, will probably expect a translation of these bard words, but I refer the former to their dictionaries, to which they bade a long farewell on leaving Eton or Harrow; and the latter to an extended paraphrase of five acts in the tragedy of Cato, Those of the softer sex who may think the Stoic philosophy rude and uncouth, will feel their nerves vibrate in unison with the love scenes.

TRANSLATOB.

way of something to balance the bad taste of the age, I shall settle *in annuity* of two thousand crowns on you: go to me solicitor, and let him draw the deed. We have been about it. the treasurer has signed and sealed, me first quarter is paid in advance.....

I wished FabncK) joy on. the unhappy fate of " The Count of Saldagna," and piobably most authors inould have envied his failure more than all the success that ever succeeded. You are in the right, continued he, to prefer me fortune to me fame What a lucky peal of disapprobation in double phoir! If the public had chosen to ring the changes on me merits rather than me misdeeds, what would they have done for me pocket? A mere paltry nothing. The common pay of the theatre might have kept me form starving, but the wind of popular malice has blown me a comfortable pension, engrossed on safe and legal parchment.

## CHAPTER XL

*Santillane gives Sctpto a situation the latter sets out  
for Neu) Spam,*

MY secretary could not look at the unexpected good luck of Nunez the poet without envy: he talked of nothing else for a week. The whims of that baggage, fortune, said he, are most unaccountable she delights to turn her lottery wheel into the lap of a sorry author, while she deals out her disappointments like a step-inother to the race of good ones. I should have no objection, though, if she would throw me up a prize in one of her vertical progresses. That is likely enough to happen, said I, and sooner than you imagine. Here you are in her temple; for it is scarcely too presumptuous to call the house of \*V prime minister the temple of fortune, where favours are conferred by wholesale, and votaries grow fat on the spoils of her altar. That is very true, sir, answered he, but we must have patience, and wait till the happy moment comes. Take my advice while it is worth having, Scipio, replied I, and make your mind easy; perhaps you are on the eve of some good appointment. And so it turned out; for within a few days an opportunity offered of employ-

ing him advantageously in me lord duke's service; and I did not suffer the happy moment to pass by.

I was engaged in chat one morning with don Ray-~~and~~ Capons, the prime minister's steward, and our conversation turned on the sources of his excellency's income. My lord, said he, enjoys the commandenes of ail the mihtary orders, yielding a reve-nue of forty thousand crowns a year; and he is only obliged to wear the cross of Alcantara. Moreover, his three offices of great chamberlam, master of the horse, and high chancellor of the Indies, bring him in an income of two hundred thousand crowns; and yet all this is nothing in comparson of the immense suins which he receives through other transatlantic channels but you will be puzzled to guess how. When vessels clear out form Seville or Lisbon for those parts of the world, he ships wine, oil, gram, and other articles, the produce of his own estate; and his consignments are duty free. With that per-quisite in his pocket, he sells his merchandise for four times its current price in Spam, and then lays out the money in spices, colouring materials, and other things which cost next to nothing in the new world, and are sold very dear in Europe, Already has he realised some millions by this traffic, without detracting form the dues of his royal master.

You will easily account for it, continued he, that the people concerned in carrying on this trade re-turn with great fortunes in their pockets; for me

lord thinks it but reasonable that they should divide their diligence between his busmess and their own.

That shrewd son of chance and opportunity, of whom we are speaking, overheard our conversation, and could nor help interrupting don Raymond to the following purport Upon me word, signer Capons, I should like to be one of those people; for I am fond of travelling, and have long wished to see Mexico. Your inclinations as a tourist shall soon be gratified, said the steward, if signor de Santillane will not stand in the way of your wishes. However particular I may think it me duty to be about the persons whom I send to the West Indies in that capacity, and they are all of me appointment, you shall be placed on the list at all adventures, if your master wishes it. You will confer on me a particular favour, said I to don Raymond; be so good as to do it in kindness to me. Scipio is a young fellow much in me good graces, very capable in busmess, and will be found irreproachable in his conduct. In a word, I would as soon answer for him as for myself

That being the case, replied Capons, he has only to repair immediately to Seville: the ships are to sail for South America in a month. I shall give him a letter at his departure for a man who will put him in the way of making a fortune, without the slightest interference in his escellency's dues and profits, which ought to be held sacred by him.

' Scipio, delighted with his birth, was in haste to

set out for Seville with a thousand crown *with* which I furnished and oil in Andalusia, and enable him to trade on his own bottom in the West Indies. And yet, overjoyed as he was to make a voyage, and as he hoped his fortune therewithal, he could not part from me without tears; and the separation raised the waters even from me dry fountains.

## CHAPTER XII.

*Don Alphonso de Leyva comes to Madrid; the motive of his journey a severe affliction to Oil Bias, and a cause of rejoicing subsequent thereon\**

No sooner had I parted with Scipio than one of the minister's pages brought me a note conceived in the following terms: " If signor de Santillane will take the trouble of calling at the sign of Saint Gabriel in the street of Toledo, he will there see a friend who is not indifferent to him."

Who can this nameless friend possibly be? said I to myself. What can be the meaning of all this mystery? Obviously to occasion me the pleasure of a surprise. I attended the summons immediately,

and oil me arrival at the place appointed, Was not a little astonished to find don Alphonso de Leyva there. Is it possible exclaimed I: you here, me lord? Yes, me dear Gil Bias, answered he with a close compression of me hand in his, it is don Alphonso himself\* Well! but what brings you to Madrid said I. You will be not a little startled, rejoined he, and no less vexed at the occasion of me journey They have taken me government of Valencia from me, and the prime ministei has sent for me to give an account of me conduct. For a whole quarter of an hour I was like a man stupified, then recovering the powers of speech • Of what, said I, are you accused? I know nothing at all about it, answered he; but me disgrace is probably owing to a visit paid about three weeks ago to the cardinal duke of Lerina, who was banished about a inonth since to his seat at Denia.

Yes, indeed! cried I in a pet, you may well attribute your inisfortune to that iinprudent visit: there is no occasion to look out for causes and effects elsewhere; but give me leave to say that you have! not acted with your usual good sense, in claiming acquaintance with that favounte out of favour; The leap is taken, and the neck broken, said he and I have nothing to do but to make the best of a bad bargain: I shall retire with me family to our pater? nal estate at Leyva, where the remnant of me days: will glide away in peace and obscuuty, ,What

taunts and teases me, is the requisition of appearing before a haughty minister, who may receive me with all the insolence of office. How humiliatng to the pride of a Spaniard! And yet it is a measure of necessity, but before the degrading ceremony took place, I wanted to talk it over with you Sir, said I, do not announce your arrival to the minister, till I have ascertained the nature of the reports to your discredit, for there are few evils without a remedy. Whatever may be your alleged crimes, you will give me leave, if you please, to act in the affair as gratitude and friendship shall dictate With this assurance, I left him at his inn, and promised to let him hear from me soon.

As I had taken no active part in state affairs since the two memorials, in which my eloquence was so signally displayed, I went to look for Camero, with a view to enquire whether don Alphonso's government was really taken from him. He answered in the affirmative, but professed not to know the reason. Finding how things stood, I determined to apply at head-quarters, and to learn the grounds of grievance from his lordship's own mouth.

My spirits were really harassed; so that there was no need of putting on the trappings and the suits of woe, to attract my lord duke's notice What is the matter, Santillane? said he as soon as he saw me. I perceive & marked unhappiness on your countenance; and tears just ready to trickle down your

cheeks Has any one behaved ill to you ? Tell me, and you shall have your revenge. My lord, answered I in a melancholy tone, even though me grief would seek to hide itself, it must have vent: me despair is past endurance. The report goes that don Alphonso is no longer governor of Valencia; a severer stroke could not have been inflicted on me. What say you, Gil Bias ? replied the minister in astonishment : what interest can you take in this don Alphonso and his government? On this question, I detailed at length me obligations to the lords of Leyva, and modestly stated me own interference with the duke of Lerma, to obtain the appointment for me friend

When his excellency had heard me through with the most polite and kind attention, he spoke thus. Make yourself easy, Gil Bias. Besides me entire ignorance of what you have just told me, I must own that I considered don Alphonso as the cardinal's creature. Only put yourself in me place: was not the visit to his emmence a most suspicious circuinstante? Yet I am willing to believe that? owing his preferment to that minister, he might have remembered him in his adversity form a motive of pure gratitude. I am sorry for having displaced a man who owed his elevation to you; but if I have pulled down your handy work I can build it up a g a i n I mean to do still more than the duke of Lerma for you Your friend don Alphonso was only governor

of Valencia; I appoint him viceroy of Arragon; you may send him word so yourself, and order him hither to take the oaths.

At these words, my feelings changed from extreme grief to an excess of joy, which completely caricatured the mediocrity of common sense, and made me utter an incoherent rhapsody of thanks. but the want of method in the madness of my discourse was not taken amiss; and on my hinting that don Alphonso was already at Madrid, he told me that I might present him this very day. I ran to the sign of Saint Gabriel, and communicated my own raptures to don Cæsar's son, by informing him of his new appointment. He could not believe what I told him; but found it a hard matter to persuade himself, that the prime minister, though likely enough to be very well disposed towards me, should extend his friendship so far as to dispose of viceroys at my instance. I carried him with me to my lord duke, who received him very affably, complimented him on his uniform good conduct in his government of Valencia, and finished by saying that the king, considering him as qualified for a higher station, had named him for the viceroyalty of Arragon. Besides, added he, your family is of a rank not to disparage the dignity of the office, so that the Arragonese nobility will have no plea for excepting against the choice of the court.

His excellency made no mention of me, and the.

public was kept in the dark as to me share in the business, indeed, this prudent silence was lucky both for don Alphonso and the minister, since the tongues of defamers would have been busy in taking to pieces the pretensions of a viceroy, who owed his preferment to me patronage.

As soon as don Caesar's son could speak with certainty of his new honours, he sent off an express for Valencia with the information to his father and Seraphina, who soon arrived in Madrid. Their first object was to find me out, and ply me thick and threefold with acknowledgments. What a proud and affecting sight for me, to behold the three persons in the world nearest me heart, vying with each other in their testimonies of affection and gratitude. The pleasure me zeal seemed personally to give them, was equal to the dignity conferred on their house by the post of viceroy. They even talked with me on a footing of equality, and scarcely remembered me original distance or servitude in the fervour of their present feelings. But not to dwell on unnecessary topics, don Alphonso having taken the oaths and returned thanks, left Madrid with his family, to take up his abode at Saragossa. He made his public entry with appropriate magnificence; and the Arragonese caused it to appear by their cordial reception, that I had a very pretty knack at picking Out a viceroy.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Gil Bias meets don Gaston de Cogollos and don Andrew de Tordestillas at the drawing-room, and adjourns with them to a more convenient place. The story of don Gaston and donna Helena de Galisteo concluded. Santillane renders some service to Tordestillas.*

I WAS up to the hilts in joy at having- so inarvelously metamorphosed an ex-governor into a viceroy: the lords of Leyva themselves were not primed and loaded so near to bursting. But very soon I had another opportunity of employing me credit in the beaten track of friendship: and there is the more occasion to quote these instances, that me readers may clearly discern with how different a man they are now incompany, from that graceless Gil Blas who, under the former ministry, carried on a shameless traffic in the honours and emoluments. of the state,

One day I was waiting in the king's antichamber, in conversation with some noblemen who, knowing me to stand well with the prime minister, were not ashamed of taking me by the hand. In the crowd was don Gaston de Cogollos, whom I had left pri-

Soner of state in the tower of Segovia. He was with don Andrew de Tordesillas, the warden. I readily quitted my-company to go and renew me acquaintance with me two friends. If they were astonished at the sight of me, I was no less so to find them here. After mutual greetings, don Gaston said: Signor de Santillane, we have many enquiries to make of each other, and this place affords little opportunity for private intercourse: allow me to request your company, where we may open our hearts freely. I made no objection; we pushed our way through the crowd, and left the palace. Don Gaston's carriage was ready waiting in the street: we all three got into it, and drove to the great market-place, where the bull-fights are exhibited. There Cogollos lived in a very handsome house.

Signor Gil Bias, said don Andrew on our entrance, at your departure from Segovia you seemed to have conceived a thorough hatred against the court; and to have formed a settled purpose of abandoning it for ever. Such was in fact me design, answered I; nor were me sentiments at all changed during the lifetime of the-late king; but when the prince his son came to the throne, I had a mind to see whether the new monarch would know me again. He did so, and received me fevourably, with a strong recommendation to the prune minister, who admitted me to his friendship, and took me more into his confidence than ever did the dulue of Lerina. This, sig-

*nor don Andrew, is me story. And now tell me whether you still hold your office in the tower of Segovia* No, indeed! answered he; *me lord duke has removed me, and put another in me room. He probably considered me as entirely devoted to his predecessor. And I, said don Gaston, was set at liberty for the contrary reason; the prune minister was no sooner informed that me imprisonment was by the duke of Lerima's order, than he ordered me to be released* The present business, signor Gil Blas, is to relate the subsequent particular of me adventures.

The first thing I did, continued he, after thanking don Andrew for his kind attentions during me confinement, was to repair to Madrid. I presented myself before the count duke of Olivarez, who said; You need not be apprehensive of any blemish on your character, in consequence of your late misfortune; you are honourably acquitted • nay, your innocence is so much the more satisfactorily established, as the marquis of Villareal, with whom you were supposed to be implicated, was not guilty, Though a Portuguese, and related to the duke of Braganza, he is less in his interests than in those of the king me master. That connection therefore ought not to have been imputed to you as a crime but, to repair your wrongs, the lung has given you a lieutenant's commission in the Spanish guards This I accepted, begging it as a favour of his excel

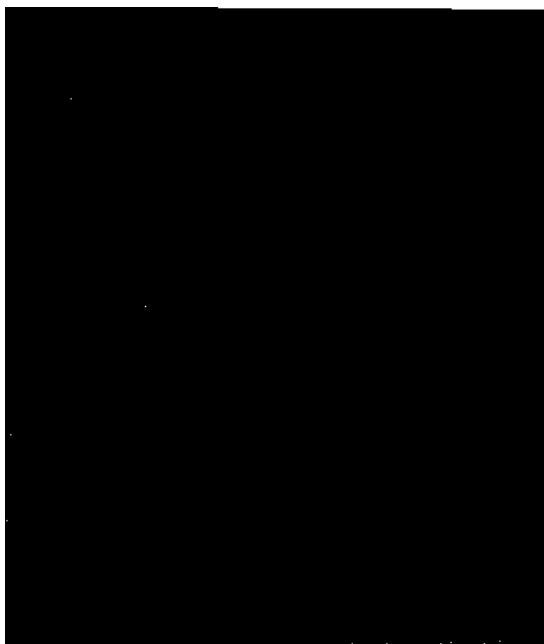
lency to allow Me, before I joined me regiment, to go and see me aunt, donna Eleonora de LaxarIlla, at Coria. The minister gave me leave of absence for a month, and I departed with only one servant.

We had got beyond Colmenar, and were threading a narrow pass between two mountams, when we came within sight of a gentleman defending himself bravely against three men, who all fell upon him together. I did not hesitate about going to his and; but hastened forward and planted myself by his side. I remarked while we were fighting, that our enemies were masked, and that we had to do with expert swordsmen. But we triumphed over the united advantages of their skill and disparity: I ran one of the three through the body; he fell form his horse and the two others immediately betook themselves to flight The victory indeed was scarcely less fatal to us than to the wretch whom 1 had killed; for we were both dangerously wounded. But concave me surprise, when I discovered the gentleman to be Combados, the husband of donna Helena. He wait no less astonished at recognising me as bis defender Ah! don Gaston, exclaimed he, was it you then who came to me assistance ? When you took me part *in* generously, you little thought it was the peison Who had snatched your mistress form you. I really did not know it, answered I; but though I had, do you think I could have wavered about doing as I have done? Can you entertain so all an opinion of in

as to believe me soul so sordid? No, no, replied he; I think better of you, and, should I die of me wounds, it will be me prayer that yours may not disable you from profiting by me death. Combados, said I though I have not yet forgotten donna Helena, know that I do not pant after the possession of her charms at the expense of your life, so far from it, that I congratulate myself on having contributed to your rescue from assassination, since by so doing I have performed an acceptable service to your wife.

While we were communing together, me servant dismounted; and, drawing near to the gentleman stretched at his length, took off his mask, when Combados, with sensations of gratitude for his deliverance, distinctly traced the features. It is Capprara, exclaimed he; that treacherous cousin who, in meie disgust at having inissed a rich inheritance which he had unjustly disputed with me, has long since cherished a murderous design against me life, and fixed on this day to put it in execution but heaven has turned him over to its determmed vengeance, and made him the victiin of his own attempt

While this conversation was going on, our blood was flowing at the same rate; and we were becoining more exhausted every minute Nevertheless, disabled as we were, we had strength enough to reach the town of Villarejo, which lies within a gun-shot





or two form the field of battle At the very first house of call we sent for surgeons The most expert came at our summons He examined our wounds, and reported them as dangerous After taking off the bandages, and diessing them a second time, he pronounced those of don Bias to be mortal Of mine he thought more favourably, and the event corresponded with his prognostic

Combados, finding himself consigned to the grave, thought only of due preparation for a most serious event. He sent an express to his wife, with an account of what had happened, particularizing his present sad condition. Donna Helena soon arrived at Villarejo Her mind was drawn different ways by two opposite occasions of distress, the hazard of her husband's life, and the fear of feeling the revival of a half extinguished flame at the sight of me. This occasioned her to experience a terrible agitation Madam, said don Blas when she appeared in his presence, you are come just in time to receive me farewell. I am at the point of death, and I consider my fate as a punishment from heaven for having taken you from don Gaston by a feint far from murmuring at it, I exhort you with my last breath to restore to him a heart which I had stolen from him Donna Helena answered him only by her tears' and indeed it was the best answer she could make, for she had neither forgotten her first love, nor the art\*-

fices where by she had been influenced to renounce her plighted faith.

It happened, as the surgeon had anticipated, that in less than three days Combados died of his wounds, while mine on the contrary wore the appearance of convalescence. The young widow, whom no earthly considerations could detach from the care of transporting her late husband's remains to Cona, that they might be deposited with due honours in the family vault, left Viliarejo on her return, after enquiring, merely as a matter of course, how I was going on. As soon as it was well enough to be removed, I bent my course to Coria, where my recovery was soon ascertained. My aunt, donna Eleonora, and don George de Galisteo were determined that my marriage with Helena should take place forthwith, lest some new caprice of fortune should part us once more. The ceremony was privately performed, on account of the late melancholy event, and within a few days I returned to Madrid with donna Helena. As my leave of absence had expired, I was afraid lest the minister should have superseded me in my lieutenancy, but he had not filled up the vacancy, and received me apologies very graciously.

Thus am I, continued Cogollos, lieutenant of the Spanish guards, and my situation is exactly to my mind. The circle of my friends is respectable and

pleasant, and I live at me ease among them Would I could say as much ' exclaimed don Andrew but I am very far from being satisfied with me lot, I have lost me appointment, which was not without its advantages, and have no friends of sufficient interest to procure me a better birth, Excuse me, signor don Andrew, cried I with a sort of upbraiding smile, you have a friend in me who may chance to be better than no friend at all I have told you already that I am a greater favourite with me lord duke than with the duke of Lerma, and will you tell me to me face that you have no interest at court? Have you not already experienced the contrary? Recollect that, through the archbishop of Grenada's powerful recommendation, I procured you a nomination for Mexico, where you would have made your fortune, if love had not stepped in and married it at Alicant My means are now more extensive, since I have the ear of the prime minister I *give* myself up to you then, replied Tordesillas , but do not send me into New Spam, though the first appointment in the colonies were at your disposal

Here we were interrupted by donna Helena, who came into the room, and improved even upon the **visions of me** fancy by the reality of her charims Cogollos introduced me as the compamon who had solaced the tedious hours of his imprisonment Yes, madam, said I to donna Helena, me conversation **did indeed** sooth his sorrows, for it turned on you.

The compliment was not thrown away; and I took me leave with repeated congratulations. With respect to Tordesillas, I assured him that within a week he should know how far my power as well as will extended

Nor were these mere words. On the very next day, the opportunity occurred. Santillane, said his excellency, the place of governor in the royal prison of Valladolid is vacant: it is worth more than three hundred pistoles a year; and is yours if you will accept of it. Not if it were worth ten thousand ducats answered I; for it would carry me away from your lordship. But, replied the minister, you may fill it by deputy, and only visit occasionally. That is as it may be, rejoined I; but I shall only accept it on condition of resigning in favour of don Andrew de Tordesillas, a brave and loyal gentleman; I should like to give him this place in acknowledgment of his kindness to me in the tower of Segovia.

This plea made the minister laugh heartily, and say: As far as I see, Gil Bias, you mean to make yourself a general patron. Even so be it, my friend; the vacancy is yours for Tordesillas; but tell me unfeignedly what fellow feeling you have in the business: for you are not such a fool as to throw away your interest for nothing. My lord, answered I, don Andrew charged me nothing for all his acts of friendship and should not a man repay his obligations? You are become highly moral and self-more

tified, replied his excellency; rather more so than under the last administration. Precisely so, rejoined I; then evil communication corrupted me principles: bargam and sale were the order of the day, and I conformed to the established practice: now, all preferment is allotted on the footing of a meritorious free gift, and me integrity shall not be the last to fall in with the fashion.

#### CHAPTER XIV,

*Santillane's visit to poet Nunez, the company and conversation.*

ONE day after dinner, a fancy seized me to go and see the poet of the Astunas, feeling a sort of curiosity to know on what floor he lodged. I repaired to the house of signor don Bertrand Gomez del Ribero, and asked for Nunez. He does not live here now, said the porter, but over the way, in apartments at the back of the house. I went thither, and crossing a small court, entered an unfurnished parlour, where me friend Fabncro was sitting at table, doing the honours to five or six guests from the hamlet and liberty of Parnassus.

They were at the latter end of a **feast**, and of course at the beginning of an affray; but a soon as they perceived me, a dead silence succeeded to **their** obstreperous argumentation. Nunez rose from his seat with much poign and circumstance of politeness to receive me, saying; Gentlemen, signor do **San tillane'** He does me the honour to visit me **under** this humble roof: as the favourite of the **prase** minister, you will all join with me in tendering your humble services. At this introduction, the worshipful company got up and made their best bows; far me rank could not fail of procuring respect from the manufactuiers of dedications. Though I was neither hungry nor thirsty, it was imposaible not to sit down and drink a toast in such society.

My presence appearing to be a restiant, Gentlemen, said I, it should seem that I have interrupted your conversation. resume it, or you driive me **away**. My learned friends, said Eabinio, were diacunsing the " Iphtgeina" of Euripides. The **bachak, Melchbr** de Villegas, a clever man of **the nasi. ak** the republic of lett don Jacinto de Romerate which **was the pea** of in terest in that t the iinmmment danger of Iphigeina, **The Whiter** contended, offering to prove his **propotifroa by all** the evidence adinissible at the bar of logic **orcrill** asin, that the d to do with the real sympathy **of that sftetoay of that**

What has to do with it then ? bawled the old hcen-tiate Gabnel of Leon indignantly. It turns with the wind, replied the bachelor

The whole company burst into a shout of laughter at this assertion, which they were far from considering as serious, and I myself thought that Melchior had only launched it by way of adding the zest of wit to the severity of critical discussion. But I was out in me calculation respecting the character of that eminent scholar he had not a gram of spright-hness or pleasantry in his whole composition. Laugh as you please, gentlemen, replied he very coolly, I mantam that there is no circuinstance but the wind, unless it be the weathercock, to interest, to strike, to louse the passions of the spectator. Figure to yourselves a multitudmous army, assembled for the purpose of laying siege to Tioy, take into the account the eager haste of the officers and common men to carry their enterprise into execution, that they may leturn with their best legs foremost into Greece, where they have left every thing most dear to them, their household gods, their wives and their children all this while a mischievous wind from the wrong quarter keeps them port-bound at Auhs, and as it were drives a nail into the very head of the expedition, so that till better weather, it was iinpossible to go and lay siege to Priam's town. Wind and weather therefore make up the interest of this tragedy. My good wishes are with the Greeks;

ray whole faculties are wrapped up in the success of their design, the sailing of their fleet is with me the only hinge of the fable, and I look at the danger of Tphigenia with somewhat of a self-interested coinplacency, because by her death the winding up of the story into a busk and favourable gale was likely to be accelerated

As soon as Villegas had finished his criticism, the laugh burst out more than ever at his expense Nunez was sly enough to side with him, that a fairel scope and broader mark might be presented to the shafts of Malicious wit, which were let fly from all the quarteis in the shipman's card, at this posteR of the sea and land. But the bachelor, eyeing them all with sublime indiffeience and supreme concept, gave them to understand how low in the list of the ignorant and vulgar they ranked in his estimation Every moment did I expect to see these vapouring spirits kindle into a blaze, and wage war against the hairy honours of each other's brarnless skulls but the joke was not camed to that length, they confmed their hostilities to opprobrious epithets, and took then leave when they had eaten and drunk as much as they could get

After then departure, I asked Fabrcio why he had separated himself form his treasurer, and whether they had quarrelled Quarrelled' answered he heaven defend me form such a misfortune ! I am on better terms than ever with signor don Bertrand,

who gave his consent to me living apart from him here therefore I receive me friends, and take me pleasure with them unmolested You know very well that I am not of a temper to lay up treasures for those who are to come after me, and as it happens luckily, I am now in circumstances to give me little classical entertainments every day I am delighted at it, me dear Nunez, replied I, and once more wish you joy on the success of your last tragedy the great Lope, by his eight hundred dramatic pieces, never made a quarter of the money which you have got by the damnation of your " Count de Saldagna "

## BOOK THE TWELFTH

### CHAPTER THE FIRST

*Gil Bias sent to Toledo by the minister The purpose  
of his journey and its success*

FOR nearly a month his excellency had been saying to me every day Santillane, the time is approaching, when I shall call your choicest powers of address into action, but the time that was coining never came. It is a long lane, however, where there is no turning, and his excellency at length spoke to me nearly as follows. They say that there is, in the company of comedians, of much note for her personal and professional fascinations, it is affirmed that she dances and sings like all the muses and graces put together, and that the whole theatre rings with applause at her performance. To these perfections is added matchless and irresistible beauty. Such a star should only shine within the circle of a court. The king has a taste for the stage, for music, and for dancing, nor must he be debarred from the pleasure of seeing and

hearing such a prodigy I have 'determined on sending you to Toledo, that you may judge for yourself whether she really is so extraordinary an actress on your feeling of her merit me measures shall be taken , for I have unlimited confidence in your discernment

I undertook to bring his lordship -a good account of this busness, and made me arrangements for setting out with one servant, but not in the minister's livery, by way of conducting matters more warly, and that precaution relished well with his excellency On me arrival at Toledo, I had scarcely alighted at the inn, when the landlord, taking me for some country gentleman, said Please your honour, you are probably come to be present at the august ceremony of an Auto da F6 to-morrow I answered in the affirmative, the more completely to mislead him, and keep me own counsel. You will see, replied he, one of the prettiest processions you ever saw in your life there are said to be more than a hundred prisoners, and ten of them are to be roasted

In good truth, next morning before sun-use, I heard all the bells in the town peal merrily and the design of then bob-majors was to acquaint the people that the pastime was about to begin Curious to see what sort of a recreation it was, I dressed in a hurry and posted to the scene of action All about that quarter, and along the streets where the

procession was to pass, were scaffolds, on one of which I purchased a standing. The Dominicans walked first, preceded by the banner of the inquisition. These christian fathers were immediately followed by the hapless victims of the holy office, selected for this day's burnt-offering. These devoted wretches walked one by one, with their head and feet bare, each of them with a taper in his hand, and a fiery, not baptismal godfather by his side. Some had large yellow scapulars, worked with crosses of St Andrew in red, others wore sugar-loaf caps of paper, illustrated with flames, and diabolical figures of all sorts by way of emblem.

As I looked narrowly at these objects of religious gaze, with a compassion in my heart which might have been construed criminal, had it run over from my eyes, I fancied that the reverend father Hilary and his companion brother Ainbrose were among those who figured in the sugar-loaf caps. They passed too near for me to be deceived. What do I see? thought I inwardly. Heaven, wearied out with the wicked lives of these two scoundrels, has given them up to the justice of the inquisition! My whole frame trembled at the thought, and my spirits were scarcely equal to support me from fainting. My connection with these knaves, the adventure at Xelva, all our pranks in partnership rushed upon me memory, and I did not know how sufficiently to

thank God for having preserved me from St Andrew's crosses and the painted devils on the paper caps

When the ceremony was over, I returned to the inn, with my heart sickening at the dreadful sight, but painful impressions soon wear away, and I thought only of my commission and its due accomplishment. I waited with Impatience for play-time, as the moment and scene of my commencing operations. On the opening of the doors, I repaired to the theatre, and took my seat next to a knight of Alcantara. We soon got into chat. 'Sn,' said I, 'the players here have been represented to me in very favourable terms may I give credit to general report?' 'The company is not contemptible,' replied the knight 'they have some first-rate performers, among the rest, the peerless Lucretia, an actress of fourteen, who will astonish you, and she plays one of her best parts to night.'

On the drawing up of the curtain, two actresses came on, with every advantage of dress and stage effect, but neither of them could possibly be the object of my search. At length Lucretia made her appearance at the back scene, and walked forwards amidst a thunder of applause. 'Ah! this is she indeed,' thought I 'and a delicate specimen of loveliness, as I am a sinner! In her very first speech she proved herself a child of nature, with energy and conception far above her years, and the approba-

tion of a provincial audience was confirmed by me metropolitan judgment The knight was happy to find I liked her, and assumed me that if I had heard her sing, my ears might have rejoiced to the sorrow of my heart Her dancing too he represented as not less formidable to the free-will of lordly man I enquired what youth, blessed as the Immortal gods, had the exquisite happiness of bringing himself to beggary for so sweet a girl She is under no avowed protection, said he, and scandal has not coupled her name with private licence but Lucretia must take care of herself, for she is under the wing of her aunt Estella, and there is not an actress in the company so warily fledged for hatching the tender passions into life

At the name of Estella, I enquired with some eagerness who she was One of our best performers, said my informant She does not play to-night, to our great loss, for her cast is that of abigails, and she humours them to perfection A little too broad perhaps but that is a fault on the right side From the features of the description, there could be no doubt but this must be Laura, that lady so notorious in these meinoirs, whom I left at Gienada

To make assurance double sure, I went behind the scenes after the play There she was, in the green-room, flirting with some men of fashion, who probably endured the aunt for the sake of the niece I came up to pay my devotions, but whim, or per-

haps revenge for me cutting and runnng from Grenada, determmed her to put on the stranger, and receive me comphments with so discouraging a coldness, as to throw me into some little confusion. Instead of laughing it off, I was fool enough to be angry, and withdrew in a cholerick deterination to return next day. Laura shall sinart for this' said I her niece shall not appear at court, I will tell the minister that she dances like a she-bear, has formed her *bravura* between the scream of a peahen and the cackle of a goose, acts like a puppet, and comprehends like an idiot

Such was me scheme of revenge, but it proved abortive. Just as I was going out of town, a foot-boy brought me the following note "Forget and forgive, and follow the bearer" I obeyed, and found Laura at her dressing table in very elegant apartments near the theatre

She rose to welcome me, saying Signor Gil Bias, you have every reason to be offended at your reception behind the scenes which was out of character between such old friends, but I really was most abommmably disconcerted. Just as you came up one of our gentlemen had brought me some scandalous stories about me niece, whose honour has always been dearer to me than me own. On coining to myself, I immediately sent me servant to find you out, with the intention of inakirig you amends to day. You have done so already, me dear Laura

said I let us therefore talk over old times You<sup>1</sup> may remember that I left you in a very ticklish predicament, when conscience and the fear of punishment drove me so precipitately from Grenada. How did you get off with your Portuguese lover? Easily enough, answered Laura do not you know that in those cases men are mere fools, and acquit us women without even calling for our defence?

I faced the marquis of Manalva out, that you were me very brother, and drew upon me iinpudence for the support of me ciedit Do you not see, said I to me Portuguese dupe, that this is all the contrivance of jealousy and rage? My rival Narcissa, infuriated at me possession of a heart which she had vavly attempted to gam, has bribed the candle-snuffei to assert that he has seen me as Aisenia's waiting-woman at Madnd It is an abominable falsehood, the widow of don Antonio Coello has always been too high in her notions, to be the hanger-on of a theatncal mistress Besides, what completely disproves the whole allegation, is me brother's precipitate retreat if he were here, it would be a subject of evidence, but Narcissa must have devised some stratagein to get him out of the way

These leasons, continued Laura, were not the most convincing in the world, but they did very well for the marquis; and that good easy nobleman continued his confidence till his return to Portugal

This happened soon after your departure, and Zapata's wife had the pleasure of seeing me lose what she could not win. After this, I staid some years longer at Grenada, till the company was broken up in consequence of some squabbles, which will take place in minic as well as in real life. Some went to Seville, others to Cordova, and I came to Toledo, where I have been for these ten years with me niece Lucietia, whose performance you must have seen last night.

This was too much to be taken gravely. Laura enquired why I laughed. Can that be a question? said I. You have neither brother nor sister, one or other of which is a necessary ingredient in an aunt. Besides, when I calculate in ray mind the lapse of time since our last separation, and compare that period with the age of your niece, it is more than possible that your relationship may be in a nearer degree of kin.

I understand you, replied don Antonio's widow, with something like a moral tinge of red in her cheek; you are an accurate chronologist. There is no garb-ling facts in defiance of your memory. Well then! Lucretia is me daughter by the marquis of Manalva. it was extremely wrong, but I cannot conceal it from you. The confession must indeed be a shock to your modesty, said I, after telling me yourself what pranks you played with the hospital steward at Za-

moIa. I must tell you moreover that Lucretra is an article of so supenoi a quality, as to render you a public benefactor by having thrown hei into the market. It were to be wished that the stolen embraces of all your fraternity might be blessed with fruitfubiess, if they could secure to themselves a patent for breeding after your sample

Should any saicastic leader, comparing this passage with some circumstances related while I was the mariquis's secretary, suspect me of being entitled to dispute the honours of paternity with that nobleman, I blush to say, that me damns are entirely out of the question

I laid open me principal adventures to Lauia in me turn, as well as the present state of me affairs. She listened with interest, and said Friend Santillane, you seem to play a principal part on the stage of the world, and I congratulate you most heartily. Should Lucretia be engaged at Madrid, I flatter myself, she will find a powerful protector in signor de Santillane. Doubt it not, answered I your daughter may have her engagement whenever you please. I can promise you that, without presuming too much on me interest. I take you at your word, lephed Laura, and would set out to-morrow, were I not under articles to this company. An order from court will cut the knot of any articles, rejoined I, -and daat I take upon myself you shall have it

within a week It is an act of chivalry, to rescue Lucretia from Toledo such a pretty little actress belongs to the royal court, as parcel of the manor

Lucretia came into the room just as I was talking of her The goddess Hebe herself never looked better in her best days it was nature in the bud, exhaling the sweets of her earliest bloom, but promising a more luxuriant waste of treasure She was just up, and her natural beauty, without the aid of art, communicated the most rapturous sensations Come, niece, said her mother, thank the gentleman for all his kindness to us he is an old friend of mine who ranks high at court, and undertakes to get us both an engagement at the theatre royal The little girl seemed to be much pleased, and made me a low courtesy, saying with an enchanting smile I most humbly thank you for your obliging intention, but, by taking me from a partial audience, are you certain that I shall not be looked down upon by that of Madrid? I may but lose by the exchange I remember hearing my aunt say, that she has seen players most favourably received in one town, and hissed off the stage in another this absolutely frightens me, beware therefore of exposing me to the derision of the court, and yourself to its reproaches Lovely Lucretia, answered I, we have neither of us any thing to fear, I am rather apprehensive lest, by the havoc you will make among hearts, you should excite rivalships and kindle das-

cord among the courtiers My niece's fears, said Laura, are better founded than yours, but I hope they will both prove vain • however feeble may be Lucretia's charms of person, her talents as an actress are at least above mediocrity

We continued the conversation for some time and I could gather, from Lucretia's share in it, that she was a girl of superior talents On taking leave, I assured them that they should immediately receive a summons to Madrid

## CHAPTER II.

*Santillane makes his report to the minister, who commissions him to send for Lucretia The first appearance of that actress before the court*

ON my return, I found my lord duke impatient to be informed of my success. Have you seen her? said he is she worth transplanting? My lord, answered I, fame, which generally runs beyond all discretion in its report of beauty, has erred on the side of partiality in its estimate of the matchless young Lucretia, she is all that youthful poets fancy

when they feign, for personal attractions, and all that veteran managers seek when they sign articles, in scenic qualifications

Is it possible<sup>7</sup> exclaimed the minister with a satisfaction which involuntarily peeped out at his eyes, and made me think he had some selfish hankerings aftei the article of me marketing at Toledo, Is it possible and is she really so charming a creature<sup>7</sup> When you see her, replied I, you will own that any verbal picture of her perfections must be altogether madequate to their due description His excellency then requiring a ininute account of me journey, I gave him all the paiticulars, not excepting Laura's stoiy, and Lucretia's parentage His lordship was delighted at the latter circuinstante, and enjoined me, with a cordial coinplunent on me skill in such delicate negociations, to finish as auspiciously as I had begun me undertaking

I went to look for Carnero, and told him that it was his excellency's pleasure he should make out an order for the admission of Estella and Lucretia, actresses form the Toledo theatre, into his ~~miskompany~~ <sup>miskompany</sup> Say you so, signed answered Carnero with a sarcastic leer ; you shall not be kept long in suspense, since you take so marked an interest in the fortunes of these two ladies\* He expedited the order in me presence, and within a week the mother and daughter sent me notice of

their arrival. I immediately hastened to their lodging near the theatre, and after an interchange of thanks on their part, and assurances of continued support on mine, left them with my best wishes for a brilliant career of success

Their names were announced in the bills as two new actresses, engaged by the special mandate of the court. They made their first appearance in a play, which they had been accustomed to perform at Toledo with loud and unanimous applause

Novelty is the very life and soul of theatrical entertainments. The house was uncommonly crowded, and I of course was among the audience. I was rather frightened before the curtain drew up. Prejudiced as I was in favour of the candidates, my alarm was in proportion to my interest. But when, once they were fairly on the boards, the din of welcome quieted all my apprehensions. Estella was considered as a first-rate actress in comic parts, and Lucretia as a female Roscius in heroines and love-sick damsels. But the love which she feigned herself, she really kindled in the hearts of the spectators. Some admired the beauty of her eyes, others were touched with the plaintive sweetness of her voice, and all, bowing to the triumph of youth, vivacity, and elegance, went away in raptures with her person

My lord duke, who took an uncommon interest in this theatrical event, was at the play that evening.

I saw him leave his box at the end of the piece, with evident approbation of our new performeis Curious to know whether they equalled his expectations, I followed him home, and into his closet, saying Well, my lord, is your excellency well pleased with little Marialva? My excellency, answered he with a sly smile, must be very difficult to be pleased, not to confiiin the public'voice yes, indeed, me good friend, I am eniaptured with youi Lucretia, and firinly believe that the king will not see her without einotron

### CHAPTER III

*Lucretia's popularity, her appearance bcfore the king, his passion, and its consequences*

GREAT was the noise about the court on this double acquisition to the theatre, it became the topic of conversation next day at the king's levee The young Lucretia was most in the mouths of the nobility, who descnbed her so feelingly, that his majesty could not but iinbibe the impression, though he was too politic to express his mterest eithei in woids or by looks.

To make amends for that restramt, he questioned

the minister as soon as he was alone with him, who stated the success of a young actress from Toledo on the evening before. Her name, added he, is Lucretia, and it is really a pity that ladies of her profession should ever have been christened by any less chaste appellation. She is an acquaintance of Santillane, who spoke so highly of her, that I thought it right to engage her for your majesty's company. The king smiled at the mention of my name, recollecting perhaps through what channel he became acquainted with Catahna, and foreboding a like assistance on the present occasion. Count, said he to the minister, I mean to see this Lucretia act to-morrow, and will thank you to let her know it.

I was of course sent with this intelligence to the two actresses. Great news, said I to Laura, whom I saw first, you will have the sovereign of the Spanish monarchy among your audience to-morrow, as the minister has desired me to inform you. I cannot doubt but you will both of you do your best to prove yourselves worthy of a royal command but I would advise you to choose a piece with music and dancing, that all Lucretia's accomplishments may be displayed at one view. We will take your counsel, answered Laura, and it shall not be our fault if his majesty is disappointed. That can scarcely happen, said I, seeing Lucretia come into the room in an undress, which shewed her person to more advantage than all the wardrobe of the theatre. he will be

the more delighted with your lovely niece, because dancing and music are his principal pleasures he may even be tempted to throw her the handkerchief I do not at all wish, replied Laura, that he should be that way inclined, all-powerful monarch as he is, he might not find the accomplishment of his desires so easy. Lucretia, though brought up behind the scenes, is not without virtuous principles, whatever pleasure she may take in applause and professional reputation, she had much rather preserve the character of a good girl, than establish that of a great actress.

Aunt, said little Manalva, joining in the conversation, why conjure up monsters only to lay them agam? I shall never be at a loss to repel the king's advances, because his taste is too refined to stoop so low. But, charming Lucretia, said I, if such a thing should happen, would you be cruel enough to let him languish like a coinion lover? Why not? answered she. Setting virtue aside, me vanity would be more flattered by me own resistance, than by the tribute of his affection. I was not a little surprised to hear a pupil of Laura's school talk so properly, and to find that with so free an education she iinbibed such unusual principles of morality.

The king, impatient to see Lucretia, went to the play next evening. The piece was got up with inusic and dancing, to shew our young actress off to the best advantage. My eyes were fixed on his

inajesty , but he coinpletcly eluded me penetration by an obstinate gravity On the following day, the minister said, Santillane, I have just been with the king, who has been talking about Lucretia, with so much anmation, that I doubt not but he is sinitten and, as I told him that you had sent for her form Toledo, he expressed a wish to confer with you in private on the subject orders are given for your admittance, run, and bring me back an account of what passes

I flew to the palace, and found the king alone He was walking up and down, in much apparent perplexity He put several questions to me about Lucretia, made me relate her history, and then asked whether the little jade had not been tampering with chastity already I boldly assured him to the contrary, though such pledges were somewhat hazaidous in general, but mme was taken, and gave the prince much pleasure If so, replied he, I select you for me agent with Lucretra, let her become acquamted with her triumph form your lips He then put a box of jewels into me hand, worth fifty thousand crowns, with a message begging her acceptance of them, and promrsing more substantial proofs of his affection

Before I went on this errant, I reported progress to me lord duke That minister, I thought, would be more vexed than rejoiced at it; supposing that he had his own views of gallantry towards Lucretra,

and would learn with regret the nvalship of his master, but I was mistaken Far form appearing chagrmed, his joy was so excessive, that it would ooze out at his tongue, in words which were not quite lost on the hearer " Indeed, fuend Philip' then I have you in me clutches while your pleasures lead you, your business must be left to me!" This side speech explamed to me the plot, an amorous prince, and a long-headed minister' My oiders were to execute me commission as speedily as possible, with the assurance that the first lord in the land would be proud to stand in me shoes Besides, there was no pimp of rank, as in the former case, to seize the profit and leave the mf a my with me, the honour and emolument were now exclusively me own.

Thus did his excellency relish the ingredients of pandarism to my palate, and I tasted them with the greedmess, but not without the qualms of an epicure, for since me imprisonment I had become regenerate, and did not take pride in dirty work, because me einployer washed his hands in perfumed water But though conscience was awake, interest was not asleep I was no longer a villam for the fun of it, but my coinphance would confirm me footing with the minister, and him it was me duty at all events to please

My first appeal was to Laura in private I opened the negociatioa delicately, and presented

me credentials in the form of the jewel-box The lady was thrown off her guard by the display Signor Gil Bias, cried she, you are one of me oldest friends, and I must not play the hypocrite strait-laced morals are inconsistent with the discipline of me sect Nothing can be more delightful to me than a conquest, which throws such a game into our hands But, between ourselves, I am afraid Lucretia is not so enlightened as we are though a daughter of Thalia, she has taken the better-behaved goddesses for her school-mistresses, and given a rebuff to two young noblemen of amiable manners and large fortunes They were not kings, you will say and truly we may hope that Lucretia's virtue will be too undisciplined to stand a royal siege but you must remember, the event is hazardous, and I shall not interpose me authority to compel her. If, far from thinking herself honoured by the fleeting passion of the king, she should revolt from his advances with disdain, let not our illustrious sovereign be offended at her reserve But do you come back hither to morrow, and carry back either the jewels, or a return of affection

I had no doubt but Laura would tutor Lucretia in the school of time-serving morality, and depended much on her instruction. It was therefore no small surprise to find, that Laura worked as much against wind and tide, to launch her daughter into the

trade-wind of evil, as other maternal pilots to set the sails of theirs in the contrary monsoon of good, and what is still more unaccountable, Lucretra, after tasting of royal delights, was so completely surfeited with the banquet as to throw herself at once into the arms of the church, where she professed, fell sick, and died of grief. Laura, disconsolate for the loss of her daughter, and the part she herself had acted in the tragedy, retired into a convent of female penitents, and did penance for the unhallowed pleasures of her former life. The king was affected by his sudden loss, but soon found comfort in some other pursuit. The premier talked little on the subject, but thought so much the more, as the reader will easily believe.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Sanhllane in a new office*

MY feelings were all alive to Lucretia's ill fate, and my own infamy in having contributed to it. The royal wants of the lover were no excuse for me taking the post of cheapener, and I determined to resign the staff of office in that department, entreating the minister to employ me in some other. He was charmed with my nice sense of honour, and

promised to comply with me scruples, laying open his inmost heart in the following speech

Some years before I was in office, chance threw me across a lady of such shape and beauty, as induced me to trace her home. I learnt that she was a Genoese, by name donna Margarita Spinola, supporting herself at Madrid on the income arising from her beauty. It was reported that don Francisco de Valeasar, an officer about the court, a rich man, an old man, and an unmarried man, laid out his money very freely on this hazardous speculation. These ruinous ought to have deterred me, but they only whetted my desires to share with Valeasar. To gain my end, I had recourse to a female broker of tenderness, who adjusted the terms of a private interview with the Genoese, and the price current being settled, the traffic was frequently repeated, it was an open market for me and me, or possibly for many other bidders.

Let that be as it may, a choice boy was in the fullness of time produced to the club, and the mother complimented every member individually in private with the credit but we were each of us too modest to acknowledge a bantling, which had so probable a claim upon a better father, so that the Genoese was compelled to maintain him on the profits of her profession. This she did for eighteen years, and dying at the end of that period, has left her son without a farthing, and what is worse, without an idea or an accomplishment.

Such, continued his lordship, is the confidence I meant to repose in you, and I shall now lay open the great design I have formed, to draw this unfortunate child from his obscurity, reverse the colour of his fate, raise him to the highest honours, and acknowledge him as my son.

At so extravagant a project it was impossible not to be open-mouthed. What, sir, exclaimed I, can your excellency have adopted so strange a resolution? Excuse me freedom; but my zeal cannot restrain itself. You will be of my mind, replied he with eagerness, when I shall have explained to you my motives. I have no mind that my estates should descend in the collateral line. You will tell me, that I am not so old as to despair of having children by madame d'Olivarez. But every one is best judge of his own condition. Know therefore that there is not a receipt in the whole extent of chemistry which I have not tried, but without effect, to appear once again in the character of a father. Wherefore, since fortune, stepping in to cover the defects of nature, presents me with a child whose parent after all I may actually be, he is mine by adoption; that is a settled point.

When I found the minister determined, I no longer argued against his resolution, as knowing him to be a man who would rather do a foolish act of his own, than adopt a wise suggestion of another. It only remains now, added he, to educate don

Henry Philip de Guzman, for by that name I intend him to be known in the world, till the time arrives when he may aspire to higher dignities You, me dear Santillane, I have chosen to superintend his conduct I have full confidence in your talents and friendship, to regulate his household, direct his studies, and make him an accomplished gentleman I would willingly have declined the office, as never having exercised the craft of a pedagogue, which required much more genius and solidity than mine, but he shut me mouth by saying it was his absolute determination that I should be tutor to this adopted son, whom he designed for the first offices of the monarchy As a bribe for my compliance, his lordship increased me little income with a pension of a thousand crowns on the commandery of Mambra

## CHAPTER V

*The son of the Genoese is acknowledged by a legal instrument, and named don Henry Philip de Guzman, Santillane establishes his household, and arranges the course of his studies.*

THE act of adoption was soon legalized with the king's consent and good pleasure, Don Henry

Philip de Guzman, as this descendant from a coin-  
inittee of fathers was named, became acknowledged  
successor to the earldom of Olivarez and the duchy  
of San Lucar The minister, to give the act all pos-  
sible publicity, communicated it through Carneio to  
the ambassadors and grandees of Spam, who were  
somewhat startled The jokers of Madrid were not  
insensible to the ridicule, and the satirical poets  
made their harvest of so fine a subject for their pen

I asked me lord duke where me pupil was Here  
in town, answered he, with an aunt from whom I  
shall remove him as soon as you have got a house  
ready This I did immediately, and furnished it  
magnificently When me establishment was com-  
plete in servants and officers, his excellency sent for  
this equivocal production, this spurious offspring  
from the renowned stock of the Guzmans. The lad was  
tall and personable. Don Heme, said his lordship  
pointing to me, this gentleman is to be your tutor  
and introduce you into the world he has me entire  
confidence, and an unlimited authority over you  
After much good advice, and many compliments to  
me, the minister retired, and I took don Henry  
home.

As soon as we got thither, I introduced him to  
his household, and explained the nature of each  
individuals employment He did not seem at all  
disconcerted at the change of circumstances, but  
received the obeisances of his dependants, as if he

had been a lord by nature, and not by chance He was not without mother-wit, but ignorant in a deplorable degree he could scarcely read and write I gave him masters for the Latin grammar, geography, history, and fencing A dancing-master of course was not forgotten - but in an affair of the first consequence, selection was difficult; for there were more eminent professors of that art in Madrid, than of all the languages and sciences put together

While I was pondering on this difficulty, a man gaudily dressed came into the court-yard, and enquired for me I went down, supposing him to be at least a knight of some military or privileged order. Signor de Santillane, said he, with a profusion of bows which anticipated his line in life, I am come to offer you my services as don Henry's governor My name is Martin Ligerio, and I have, thank heaven, some reputation in the world. I have no occasion to canvass for scholars that is all very well for petty dancing-masters ! My custom is to wait till I am sent for; but being a sort of appendage to the house of Guzman, and having taught its various branches for a long period, I thought it a point of respect to wait on you first I perceive, answered I, that you are just the man we want. What are your terms? Four double pistoles a month, answered he; and I give but two lessons a week. Four doubloons a month' cried I. that is an exorbitant price. Exorbitant! rejoined he with astonish-

ment why it is not more than eight times as much as you would give to a mathematical master or a Greek professor

There was no resisting so ludicrous a comparison of merit, I laughed outright, and asked signor Ligero whether he really thought his talents worth more than those of the first proficient in learning and science. Most assuredly, said he at least if you measure our pretensions by their respective utility. What sort of inachmes may those be which are fashioned under their hands? Jointless puppets, unlicked cubs, open-mouthed and impenetrable shell-fish but our lessons supple and render pliant the intractable stiffness of their component parts, and bring them insensibly into shape. in short, we communicate to them a graceful motion, a polite address, the carriage of good company, and the outward marks of elevated rank.

I could not but give way to such cogent arguments in favour of the dancing-master's occupation, and engaged him about don Henry's person, without haggling as to terms, since those specified were only at the rate established by the leading professors of the art\*

## CHAPTER VI.

*Scipio's return form New Spam. Gil Blas places him about don Henry's person That young nobleman's course of study His career of honour, and his fathers inatrimonial speculation on his behalf. A patent of nobility conferred on Gil Blas against his will.*

I HAD not yet half arranged don Henry's household, when Scipro returned form Mexico. He brought with him three thousand ducats in cash, and merchandize to double the amount I wish you joy, said I the foundation of your fortune is lard; and if you prefer a snug birth at Madrid to the risk of going back, you have only to tell me so There is no question about that, said the son of Coschna. a genteel situation at home is far preferable to a second voyage

After relating the birth and adventures of the little adopted Guzman, and me own appointment as tutor, I offered him the situation of upper servant to this babe of chance: Sapio, who could have devised nothing better for himself, readily accepted the office, and within the small space of three or four days got the length of his new master's foot

I had taken it for granted that the verb-grinders

and concord-manufacturers to whom I had given the plant of this Genoese bastard would lose stock and block, under the idea that he was of an intrac-table and profitless age. but me forebodings were completely reversed He not only comprehended, but easily retamed the lessons of his masters, and they were very well satisfied with him. I was in an enormous hurry to greet the ears of me lord duke with this intelligence; and he received it with abundant joy. Santillane, exclaimed he with delight, you give me new life by the assurance of don Henry's capacity and application, it runs in the blood of the Guzmans; and I am the more confirmed in his being unquestionably me own, because I am just as fond of him as if inadame d'Olivarezherself had lam in of the brat in due forin under this very roof. The voice of nature, you perceive, will make itself heard. I thought it unnecessary to give his lordship any opinion on that subject, but with a delicate deference to his credulity, left him to enjoy his fancied paternity in peace, whether well or ill founded.

Though all the Guzmans held this clod of newly turned up nobility in utter scorn, they were politic enough to smooth over the corrugations of their contempt; nay, some of them even affected to languish for his good opinion: the ambassadors and principal nobility then at Madrid waited on him, With all the ceremony appertaming to the rank of a

legitimate son. The minister, intoxicated with the fumes of incense offered to his idol, began to build a temple worthy of the worship. The cross of Alcantara was the foundation, with a commandery of ten thousand crowns. The next step was to a high office in the royal household, and the completion of the whole was in matrimony. Wishing to connect him with a family of the first rank, he picked out donna Johanna de Velasco, daughter to the duke of Castile, and had influence enough to accomplish the alliance, though against the will of the duke and of all his kindred.

Some days before the nuptial ceremony, his lordship put some papers into me hand, saying Here, Gil Blas, is a patent of nobility which I have procured as the reward of your services. My lord, answered I, in much astonishment, your excellency knows very well that I am the son of an usher and a duenna it would be cancelling the peerage to confer it on me, and besides, of all the boons in his majesty's power to bestow, it is that which I deserve and desire the least. Your birth, replied the minister, is a slight objection. You have been employed on affairs of state under the duke of Lerma's administration and under mine, besides, added he with a smile, have you not rendered some things to Cæsar, which Cæsar is bound, on the honour of a prince, to render back in another shape? To deal candidly, Santillane, you will make just as good a

lord as the best of them nay, more than that, your high office about me son is incompatible with plebeian rank, and therefore have I procured you to be created Since your excellency will have it so, replied I, there is no more to be said So saying no more, I put me new blown honours in me pocket and walked off

Now can I make any Joan a lady! said I to myself when I had got into the street but it was not the handy-work of me parents that made me a gentleman I may add a foot of honour to me name whenever I please, and if any of me acquaintance should snuff or snigger when they call me don, I may suck me teeth, lean upon me elbow, and draw out me credentials of heralldiy But let us see what they contam, and how the corporeal particles, which have accrued during me artificial contact with the court, are distinguished by genealogical metaphysics from the native clay of me original extraction. The instrument ran thus in substance That the king in acknowledgment of me zeal in raovie than one instance for his service and the good of the state, had been graciously pleased to confer this mark of distinction on me I may safely say that the recollection of the act for which I was promoted effectually kept down me pride Neither did the bashfulness of low birth ever forsake me; so that nobility to me was like a hair shirt to a penitent: I determmed therefore to lock up the

evidences of me shame in a private drawer, instead of blazoning them to dazzle the eyes of the foolish or conupt.

## CHAPTER VII.

*An accidental meeting between Gil Blas and Fabricio. Their last conversation together, and a word to the wise form Nunez.*

THE poet of the Astunas, as the reader, if he thought of him, may have remarked, was very negligent in his intercourse with me. It was not to be expected, that me einployments would leave me time to go and look after him. I had not seen him since the critical discussion touching the Iphigenia of Euripides, when chance threw me across him, as he came out of a pnnting-house I accosted him, saying • So' so! master Nunez, you have got among the printers. this looks as if we were threatened with some new production.

You may indeed prepare yourselves for such an event, answered he: I have a pamphlet just ready for publication which is likely to make some noise in the lhterary world. There can be no question about its merit, replied I: but I cannot conceive why

you waste your time in writing pamphlets it should seem as if such squibs and rockets were scarcely worth the powder expended in their manufacture It is very true, rejoined Fabricio: and I am well aware that none but the most vulgar gazers are caught by such holiday fireworks however, this single one has escaped me, and I must own that it is a child of necessity. Hunger, as you know, will bring the wolf out of the forest.

What' exclaimed I, is it the author of the " Count of Saldagna" who holds this language? A man with an annuity of two thousand crowns? Gently, me friend, interrupted Nunez I am no longer a pensioned poet The affairs of the treasurer don Bertrand are all at sixes and sevens he has been at the gaming table, and played with the public money an extent has issued, and me rent-charge is gone posthaste to the devil. That is a sad affan, said I but may not inatters come round agam in that quarter? No chance of it, answered he signor Gomez del Ribero, in plight as destitute as that of his poor bard, is sunk for ever, nor can he, as they say, by any possible contrivance be set afloat agam.

In that case, me good friend, replied I, we must look out for some post which may make you amends for the loss of your annuity. I will ease your conscience on that score, said he: though you should offer me the wealth of the Indies as a salary in one of your offices, I would reject the boon: clerkships

are no object to a partner in the firm of the Muses; a literary birth, O! absolute starvation for your humble servant' If you must have it plump, I was born to live and die a poet, and the man whose destiny is hanging will never be drowned

But do not suppose, continued he, that we are altogether forlorn and destitute besides that we accommodate the requisites of independence to our finances, we do not look far beyond our noses in calculating the average of our fortunes It is insinuated that we often dine with the most abstemious orders of the religious, but our sanctity in this particular is too credulously imputed There is not one of me brother wits, without excepting the calculators of almanacs, who has not a plate laid for him at some substantial table for my own part, I have the run of two good houses To the master of one I have dedicated a romance, and he is the first commissioner of taxes, who was ever associated with the Muses. the other is a rich tradesman in Madrid, whose lust is to get wits about him; he is not nice in his choice, and this town furnishes abundance to those who value wit more by quantity than quality.

Then I no longer feel for you, said I to the poet of the Asturias, since you are satisfied in your condition. But be that as it may, I assure you once more, that you have a friend in Gil Bias, however you may slight him: if you want me purse, come and **take** it it will not fail you at a pinch; and

you must not stand between me and me sincere friendship

By that burst of sentiment, exclaimed Nunez, I know and thank me friend Santillane in return, let me give you a salutary caution While me lord duke is in his meridian, and you are all in all with him, reap, bind, and gather in your harvest when the sun sets, the gleaners are sent home I asked Fabricro whether his suspicions were surely founded; and he returned me this answer My information comes from an old knight of Calatrava, who pokes his nose into secrets of all sorts, his authority passes current at Madrid, much as that of the Pythian newsinongers did through Greece, and thus his oracle was pronounced in me hearing My lord duke has a host of enemies in battle array against him, he reckons too securely upon his influence with the king, for his inajesty, as the report goes, begins to take in hostile representations with patience. I thanked Nunez for his friendly warning, but without much faith in his prediction for me master's authority seemed looted in the court, like the teinpest-scoffing firmness of an oak in the native soil of the forest.

## CHAPTER VIII

*Gil Bias finds that Fabricio's hint was not without foundation The king's journey to Saragossa*

THE poet of the Astunas was no bad politician. There was a court plot against the duke, with the queen at the bottom, but their plans were too deeply lard to bubble at the surface. During the space of a whole year, me simplicrty was insensible to the brewing of the tempest.

The revolt of the Catalans, with France at their back, and the ill success of the war for their suppression, excited the murmurs of the people, and whetted their tongues against government. A council was held in the royal presence, and the marquis de Grana, the emperor's ambassador, was specially requested to assist. The subject in debate was whether the king should remam in Castile, or go and take the command of his troops in Arragon. The minister spoke first, and gave it as his opinion that his majesty should not qurt the seat of government. All the members supported his arguments, with the exception of the marquis de Grana, whose whole heart was with the house of Austria, and the sentiments of his soul on the tip of his tongue, after the homely honesty of his nation. He argued so forcr-

bly against the minister, that the king embraced his opinion from conviction, though contrary to the vote of council, and fixed the day when he would set out for the army

This was the first time that ever the sovereign had differed from his favourite. and the latter considered it as an irreparable affront. Just as the minister was withdrawing to his closet, there to bite upon the bundle, he espied me, called me in, and told me with much discomposure what had passed in debate. Yes, Santillane, observed he, the king, who for the last twenty years has spoken only through my mouth and seen with my eyes, is now to be wheedled over by Grana, and that on the score of zeal for the house of Austria, as if that German had a more Austrian soul in his body than myself.

Hence it is easy to perceive, continued the minister, that there is a strong party against me, with the queen at the head. Heaven forbid it ! said I. Has not the queen for upwards of twelve years been accustomed to your paramount authority, and have you not taught the king the knack of not consulting her ? The desire of making a campaign may for once have enlisted his majesty on the side of the maiquis de Giana. Say rather that the king, argued me lord duke, will be surrounded by his principal officers when in camp; and then the disaffected will find their opportunity for poisoning him against my administration. But they overreach themselves; for

I shall completely insulate the prince from all their approaches. and so he did, in a manner which, for example, deserves not to be passed over

The day of the king's departure being arrived, the monarch leaving the queen regent, proceeded for Saragossa by way of Aianjuez, a delightful residence, where he whiled away three weeks Cuenca was the next stage, where the minister detained him still longer by a succession of amusements A hunting party was contrived at Molina in Arragon, and hence there was no choice of road but to Saragossa The army was near at hand, and the king was preparing to review it but his keeper sickened him of the project, by making him believe that he would be taken by the French, who were in force in the neighbourhood so that he was cowed by a groundless apprehension, and consented to be a prisoner in his own court The minister, from an affectionate regard to his safety, secluded him from all approach; so that the principal nobility, who had equipped themselves at enormous charges to be about his person, could not even procure an occasional audience. Philip, weary of bad lodgings and worse recreation at Saragossa, and perhaps feeling himself scarcely his own master, soon returned to Madrid. Thus ended the royal campaign, and the care of maintaining the honour of the Spanish colours was left to the inarques de los Velez, commander in chief

## CHAPTER IX

*The revolution of Portugal, and disgrace of the prime minister.*

A FEW days after the king's return, an alarming report prevailed at Madrid, that the Portuguese, considering the Catalan revolt as an opportunity offered them by fortune for throwing off the Spanish yoke, had taken arms, and chosen the duke of Braganza for their king, with a full determination of supporting him on the throne. In this they conceived that they did not reckon without their host; because Spain was then embroiled in Germany, Italy, Flanders, and Catalonia. They could not in fact have hit upon a crisis more favourable for their deliverance from so galling a yoke.

It was a strange circumstance, that while both court and city were struck with consternation at the news, the lord duke attempted to joke with the king, and make the duke of Braganza his butt. Philip, however, far from falling in with this ill-timed pleasantry, assumed a serious air, of ill omen to the minister, who felt his seat to totter under him. The queen was now his declared enemy, and openly accused him of having caused the revolt of Portugal by his misconduct. The nobility in general, and es-

pecially those who had been at Saragossa, when they saw a cloud gathering about the minister, joined the queen's party\* but the decisive blow was the return of the duchess dowager of Mantua from her government of Portugal to Madrid, for she proved clearly to the king's conviction, that the counsels of his own cabinet produced the revolution

His majesty, deeply impressed with what he had heard, was now completely recovered from every symptom of partiality towards his favourite. The minister, finding that his enemies were in possession of the royal ear, wrote for permission to resign his employments, and retire from court, since all the political mischances of the time were ascribed to his personal delinquency. He expected a letter like this to produce a wonderful effect, reckoning as he did upon the prince's private friendship, which could scarcely brook a separation but his majesty's answer undeceived him, by laconically complying with his ostensible wish to withdraw.

Such a sentence of banishment, in the king's own hand-writing, came like a thunder-storm in harvest but though destruction to his long-chenshed hopes, he affected the serene look of constancy, and asked me what I would do in his circumstances. I would drive before the wind, said I; renounce the ungrate-

\* At length his sovereign frowns—the tram of state  
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.

*Johnson's Imitation of Juvenal's Tenth Satire,*

ful court, and pass the remander of me days in peace on me own estate. You counsel wisely, replied me master, and I shall set out for Loeches, there to finish me career, after one more interview with his majesty for I could wish just to convince him that I have done what man can do to support the heavy load of state upon me shoulders, and that it was not within the compass of possibility to prevent the unfortunate events which are imputed to me as a crime. It were equally reasonable to charge the pilot with the wrecking fury of the storm, and make him answerable for the uncontroled power of the elements. Thus did the minister inwardly flatter himself, that he should set things to rights agam, and once more fix firm the seat which was shaking under him but he could not procure an audience, and was even commanded to resign his key of private admission into his majesty's closet.

This last requisition convinced him that there was no hope; and he now made up his mind in earnest for retirement. He looked over his papers, and had the prudence to burn a great number he then selected a small household for his retreat, and publicly announced his departure for the next day. Apprehending insult from the mob, if the time and manner of his setting out were public, he escaped early in the morning through the kitchens out at the back door, got into a shabby, hired carnage with his confessor and me, and reached in safety the road

leading to Loeches, a village on his own estate, where his countess had founded a magnificent convent of Dominican nuns.

## CHAPTER X

*A difficult, but successful weaning from the world.  
The minister's employments in his retreat*

MADAME d'Olivarez staid behind her husband some few days, with the intention of trying what her tears and entreaties might do towards his recall; but in vain did she prostrate herself before their majesties the king paid not the least attention to her pleadings and remonstrances, though artfully adapted for effect; and the queen, who hated her mortally, took a savage pleasure in her tears. The minister's lady, however, was not easily discouraged she stooped so low as to solicit then good offices from the ladies of the bed-chamber, but the fruit of all this meanness was only the sad conviction, that it excited more contempt than pity. Heart-broken at having degraded herself by supplications so humiliating, and yet so unavailing, she departed to her husband, and mourned with him the loss of a situa-

tion, which under a reign like that of Philip the Fourth, was little short of sovereign power

The accounts her ladyship brought from Madrid were wormwood to the duke. Your enemies, said she, sobbing, with the duke of Medina Celi at their head, are loud in the king's praises for your removal; and the people triumph in your disgrace with an insolent joy, as if the cloud of adversity were to be dispelled by the breath which dissolved your administration. Madam, said my master, follow me example, suppress your discontent we must drive before the storm, when we cannot weather it. I did think, indeed, that my favour would only be eclipsed with the lamp of life a common illusion of ministers and favourites, who forget that they breathe but at the good pleasure of their sovereign. Was not the duke of Lerma as much mistaken as myself, though fondly relying on his purple, as a pledge for the lasting tenure of his authority?

Thus did my lord duke preach patience to the partner of his cares, while his own bosom heaved under the direst pressure of anxiety. The frequent dispatches from don Henry, who was staying about the court to pick up information, kept him continually on the fret. Scipio was the messenger; for he was still about the person of that young nobleman, though I had relinquished me post on his marriage. Some times we heard of changes in the inferior departments of office, solely for the purpose of weak-

ing vengeance on his creatures, and filling up the vacancies with his enemies. Then don Lewis de Haro was represented as advancing in favour, and likely to be made prime minister. But the most inortifying circumstance of all was the change in the viceroyalty of Naples, which was taken from his friend, the duke de Medina de las Torres, and bestowed on the high admiral of Castile, who was his bitterest enemy. For this there was no other motive, but the pleasure of giving pam to a falling favourite.

For the fist three months, his lordship gave himself up in his solitude a prey to disappointment and regret. but his confessor, a holy and pious Dommcan, supporting his religious zeal with manly eloquence, succeeded in poumg the balm of consolation into his soul. By continually representing to him, with apostolic energy, that his etemal salvation was now the only object worth his care, he weaned ham gradually form the uses of this world. His excellency was no longer panting for news form Madrid, but learning a new and important lesson, how to die. Madame d'Olivarez too, making a virtue of necessity, sought refuge for herself in the inaternal guardianship of her convent, where Providence had reared up, for her edification in faith and good works, a sisterhood of holy inaidens, whose spiritual discourses fed ber soul, as if with manna in the wilderness. My masters peace within his own

bosom advanced, as he withdrew more backward from sublunary things. The employment of his day was thus laid out almost the whole morning was devoted to religious duties, till dinner-time, and after dinner, for about two hours, he played at different games with me, and some of his confidential domestics he then generally retired alone into his closet till sun-set, when he walked round his garden, or rode out into the neighbourhood either with his confessor or me,

One day when I was alone with him, and was particularly struck with his apparent self-complacency, I took the liberty of congratulating his lordship on his complete reconciliation to retirement. Use, however late acquired, is second nature, answered he for though I have all my life been accustomed to the bustle of business, I assure you that I become every day more and more attached to this calm and peaceful mode of life

## CHAPTER XI.

*A change in his lordship for the worse The inarvellous cause, and melancholy consequences of his dejection*

His excellency some times amused himself with gardening, by way of variety. One day as I was watching his progress, he said jokingly, You see, Santillane, a fallen minister can turn gardener at last Nature will prevail, me lord, answered I. You plant and water something useful at Loeches, while Dionysins of Syracuse whipped school-boys at Corinth My master was not displeased either With the coinpairson or the coinpliment

We were ail delighted at the castle to see our protector, rising above the cloud of adversity, take pleasure in so novel a mode of life. but we soon perceived an alarming change. He became gloomy, thoughtful, and melancholy Our parties at play were all given up, and no efforts could succeed to divert his mind. From dinner-time till evening he never left his closet We thought the dreams of vanished greatness had returned to break his rest; and in this opinion the reverend Dominican gave the rein to his eloquence; but it could not outstrip the rapid course of that hypochondriac malady, which triumphed ovei all opposition\*

It seemed to me there was some deeper cause, which it behoved a sincere friend to fathom Taking advantage of our being alone together, My lord, said I in a tone of mingled respect and affection, whence is it that you are no longer so cheerful as heretofore ? Has your philosophy lost ground ? or has the world recovered its allurements ? Surely you would not plunge again into that gulph, where your virtue must inevitably be shipwrecked' No, heaven be praised ! replied the minister me pait at couit has long faded from me memory, and its trappings from me eyes. Indeed ! why then, resumed I, since you have strength enough to banish false regrets, are you so weak as to indulge a melancholy which alarms us all ? What is the matter with you, me dear master ? continued I, felling at his knees some secret sorrow preys upon you • can you hide it from Santillane, whose zeal, discretion, and fidelity you have so often experienced ? Why am I so unhappy as to have lost your confidence ?

You still possess it, said his lordship but I must own, it is reluctantly that I shall reveal the subject of me distress: yet the importunities of such a friend are irresistible. To no one else could I impart so singular a confidence. Yes, I am the prey of a morbid melancholy which eats inwardly into me vitals • a spectre haunts me every moment, arrayed in the most terrific form of preternatural horror. In vain have I argued with myself that it is a vision of the

bram, an unreal mockery its continual presentments blast me sight, and unseat me leason Though me understanding teaches me, that in looking on this spectre I stare at vacancy, me spirits are too weak to derive coinfort form the conviction Thus much have you extorted form me. now judge whether the cause of me melancholy is fit to be divulged.

With equal grief and astonishment did I listen to this strange confession, which implied a total derangement of the nervous system This, me lord, said I, must proceed form injudicious abstmence So I thought at first, answered he; and to try the experiment, I have been eating more than usual for some days past but it is all to no purpose, the phantom takes his stand as usual It will vanish, said I, if your excellency will only divert your mind by your accustomed relaxations with your household Company and gentle occupation are the best remedies for these affections of the spirits

In a short time after this conversation, his lordship became seriously indisposed, and sent for two notaries form Madrid, to make his will Three capital physicians followed in then track, who had the reputation of curing their patients now and then As soon as it was noised about in the castle that these last undertakers were arrived, the case was given up for lost; weeping and gnashing of teeth took place universally, and the family mourning was ordered. They brought with them their usual

understrappers, an apothecary and a surgeon \* The notaries were suffered to earn their fee first, after which death's notaries prepared to take a bond of the patient They practised in the school of Sangrado, and from their very first consultation, ordered bleeding so frequently and freely, that in six days they brought his lordship to the point of death, and on the seventh delivered him from the terror of his sprite.

After the minister's decease, a lively and sincere sorrow reigned in the castle of Loeches The whole household wept bitterly Far from deriving consolation from the certainty of being remembered in his will, there was not a dependent who would not willingly have saved his life by the sacrifice of the legacy As for me, whom he had most delighted in, attached to him as I was from disinterested friendship, my grief was more acute than that of the rest I question whether Antoma cost me more tears

• Behind him sneaks  
Another mortal, not unlike himself,  
Of jargon full, with terms obscure o'ercharg'd,  
Apothecary call'd, whose foetid hands  
With power mechanic, and with charms arcane,  
Apollo, god of medicine, has endued.

BRAMSTON

## CHAPTER XII

*The proceedings at the castle of Loeches after his lordship's death, and the course which Santillane adopted*

THE minister, according to his last injunctions, was buried without pomp and without procession in the convent, with a dirge of our lamentations. After the funeral, madame d'Olivarez called us together to hear the will read, with which the household had good reason to be satisfied. Every one had a legacy pirportioned to his claim, and none less than two thousand crowns. mme was the largest, amounting to ten thousand pistoles, as a mark of his singular regard. The hospitals were not forgotten, and provision was made for an annual commemoration in several convents.

Madame d'Olivarez sent all the household to Madrid to receive their legacies from don Raymond Capons, who had orders to pay them; but I could not be of the party, in consequence of a violent fever from distress of mind, which confined me to the castle for more than a week. During that time, the reverend Dommcan paid me all possible attention. He had conceived a friendship for me, which was not confined to me worldly interests, and was

anxious to know how I meant to dispose of myself on me recovery. I answered that I had not yet made up me mind upon the subject there were moments when me feelings strongly prompted towards a religious vow. Precious moments! exclaimed the Dommican. you will do well to profit by them I advise you as a friend to retire, to our convent at Madrid for example ; there to become a pious benefactor by the free gift of your whole fortune, and to die in the livery of Samt Dommrc Many very questionable Christians have made amends for a life of sin by so holy an end

In the actual disposition of me mind, this advice was not unpalatable; and I proimised to reflect upon it But on consulting Scipio, who came to see me immediately after the monk, he treated the very notion as the phantom of a distempered bram For shame! said he does not your estate at Lirias offer a mere eligible seclusion? If yon were delighted with it formerly, the charm will be creased tenfold, now that the lapse of years has inoderated your sfoee of pleasure, and softened down your taste to the simple beauties of nature.

It was no difficult matter to operate a change in me inclinations. My friend, said I, you carry it decidedly against the advocate of Samt Doininic. We will go back to Lirias as soon as I am well enough to travel. This happened shortly; for *in* the fever subsided, i soon felt myself sufficiently strong

to put me design in execution We went first to Madrid The sight of that city gave me far other sensations than heretofore As I knew that almost its whole population held in horror the memory of a minister, of whom I cherished the most affectionate remembrance, I could not feel at ease within its precincts. My stay was therefore limited to *five* or six days, while Scipio was making the necessary arrangements for our rustication In the mean time, I waited on Capons, and received me legacy in ready money I likewise made me arrangements with the receivers for the regular remittance of me pensions, and settled all me affairs in due order

The evening before our departure, I asked the son of Coschna whether he had received his farewell from don Henry Yes, answered he, we took leave of each other this morning with mutual civility, he went so far as to express his regret that I should quit him, but however well satisfied he might be with me, I am by no means so with him Mutual content is like a river, which must have its banks on either side. Besides, don Henry makes but a pitiful figure at court now, he has fallen into utter contempt people point at him with their finger in the streets, and call him a Genoese bastard. Judge then for yourself whether it is consistent with me character to keep up the connection.

We left Madrid one morning at sun-rise, and went for Cuenca The following was the order of

our equipment, we two in a chaise and pair, three mules, laden with baggage and money, led by two grooms, and two stout footmen, well armed, in the rear ; the grooms wore sabres, and the postillion had a pair of pistols in his holsters. As we were seven men in all, and six of us determined fellows, I took the road gaily, without trembling for me legacy. In the villages through which we passed our mules chimed their bells merrily, and the peasants ran to their doors to see us pass, supposing it to be at least the parade of some nobleman going to take possession of a viceroyalty.

## CHAPTER XIII

*The return of Gil Bias to his seat. His joy at finding his god-daughter Seraphina marriageable, and his own second venture in the lottery of love*

WE were a fortnight on our journey to Linas, having no occasion to make rapid stages. The sight of my own doinam brought melancholy thoughts into my mind, with the image of my lost Antonia. But better topics of reflection came to my aid, with a full purpose to look at things on the brighter side, and the lapse of two-and-twenty

years, which had gradually impaned the force of tender regret.

As soon as I entered the castle, Beatrice and her daughter greeted me most cordially, while the family scene was interesting in the extreme. When their mutual transports were over, I looked earnestly at me god-daughter, saying • Can this be the Seraphina whom I left in her cradle? how tall and pretty ' we must make a good match for her What ' me dear god-father, cried me little girl with an enchanting blush, you have but just seen me, and do you want to get rid of me at once? No, me lovely child, replied I, we hope not to lose you by inarriage ; but to find a husband for you in the neighbourhood

There is one ready to your hands, said Beatrice Seraphina made a conquest one day at mass. Her suitor has declared his passion, and asked me consent I told him that his acceptance depended on her father and her god-father; and here you are to determme for yourselves.

What is the character of this village lordhng ? said Scipio. Is he not, like his fellows, the little tyrant of the soil, and insolent to those who have no pedigree to boast? The furthest form it in the world, answered Beatrice; the young man is gentle in his teinper and polished in his manners; handsome withal, and somewhat under thirty. You pamt him in flattering colours, said I to Beatrice, what in

his name? Don Juan de Jutella, replied Scipio's wife. it is not long since he came to his inheritance he lives on his own estate about a mile off, with a younger sister of whom he takes care I once knew something of his family, observed I, it is one of the best in Valencia, I care less for lineage, cried Scipio, than for the qualities of the heart and mind, this don Juan will exactly suit us, if he is a good sort of man He is belied else, said Seraphina, with a blushing interest in our conversation; the inhabitants of Linas, who know him well, say all the good of him you can conceive. I smiled at this, and her father, not less quick-sighted, saw plainly that her heart had a share in the testimony of her tongue

The gentleman soon heard of our arrival, and paid his respects to us within two days. His address was pleasing and manly, so as to prepossess us in his favour. He affected merely to welcome us home as a neighbour. Our reception was such as not to discourage the repetition of his visit; but not a word of Seraphina I When he was gone, Beatrice asked us how we liked him. We could have no objection to make, and gave it as our opinion that Seraphina could not dispose of herself better.

The next day, Scipio and I returned the visit. We took a guide, and luckily; for otherwise it might have puzzled us to find the place. It was not

till our actual arrival that it was visible, for the mansion was situated at the foot of a mountam, in the middle of a wood, whose lofty trees hid it from our view. There was an antique and ruinous appearance about it, which spoke more for the descent than the wealth of its proprietor. On our entrance, however, the elegance of the interior arrangement made amends for the dilapidated grandeur of the outer walls.

Don Juan received us in a handsome room, where he introduced his sister Dorothea, a lady between nmeteen and twenty years of age. She was a good deal tricked out, as if she had pnned and loaded herself for conquest, in expectation of our visit. Thus presenting all her charms in full force, she did by me much as Antonia had done befoie, but I managed me raptures so discreetly, that even Scipio had no suspicion. Our conversation turned, as on the preceding day, on the mutual pleasure of good neighbourhood. Still he did not open on the subject of Seraphina, nor did we attempt to draw him out. During our interview, I often cast a side glance at Dorothea, though with all the reserve of delicate apprehension; whenever our eyes met, the citadel of me heart was ready to surrender. To describe the object of me love justly, as well as feelingly, her beauty **was** not of the most perfect **kind**: **her skin was of a dazzling whiteness, and her lips**

united the colour with the fragrance of the rose; but her features were not so regular and well-proportioned as might have been wished \* yet altogether, she won me heart.

In short, I left the mansion of Jutella, a different man from what I was on entering it so that, returning to Linas with my whole soul absorbed in Dorothea, I saw and spoke only of her. How is this, master? said Scipio with a look of astonishment you seem to be very much taken with don Juan's sister! Can you be in love with her? Yes, my friend, answered I: to me shame be it spoken. Since the death of Antonia, how many lovely females have passed in review before me with indifference, and must my passions be irresistibly kindled at this time of life? Indeed, sir, replied the son of Coschna, you may bless your stars, instead of squabbling with yourself you are not so old as to make your sacrifice at the shrine of love a bye-word, and time has not yet ploughed such furrows on your brow, as to render hopeless the desire of pleasing. When you see don Juan next, ask him boldly for his sister: he cannot refuse her to you; and besides, if his views in her settlement are ambitious, how can he do better? You have a patent of nobility in your pocket, and upon that your posterity may ride easy, after five generations, when pedigree herself shall be lost in the confusion of her materials, it may exercise the diligence of learned enquiry, to

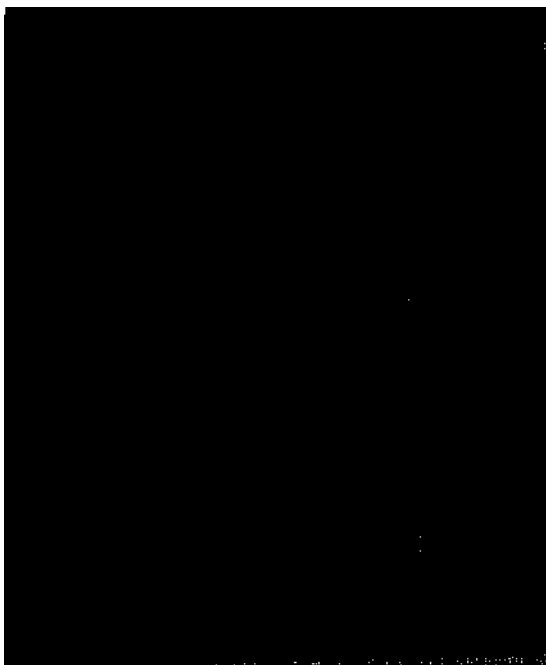
trace the family of the Santillanes to the beginning of its archives, and consecrate the fame of its founder by the indistinctness of his story

## CHAPTER XIV

### *A double mamage, and the conclusion of the history*

BY this discourse, Scipio encouraged me to declare myself, without considering how he exposed me to the danger of a refusal. My own resolution was taken with fear and trembling. Though I carried ray years well, and might have sunk at least ten, it did not seem unlikely that a young beauty might turn up her nose at the disparity. I determined however to bolt the question the first time I saw her brother, who was not without his trepidations on the subject of me god-daughter.

He returned me call the next morning, just as I had done. dressing Signor de Santillane, said he, I wish to speak with you on some serious business. I took him into me closet, where entering on the subject at Once, I inagme, continued he, that you are not unacquainted with the purpose of me visit: I love Seraphina; you are all in all with her father





I must request you theiefore to intercede and procure for me the accoinplishment of me heart's desire then shall I have to thank you for the prime bliss of me existence Signor don Juan, answered I, as you come to the point at once, you can have no objection to me following your example My good offices are fully at your service, and I shall hope for yours with your sister in return

Don Juan was agreeably surpsned Can it be possible, exclaimed he, that Dorothea should have made a conquest of your heart since yesterday<sup>?</sup> It is even so, said I, and it would make me the happiest of men, if the proposal should meet with your joint approbation You may rely on that, replied he though with some pretensions to family pride, yours is not an alliance to be despised You flatter me highly, rejoined I that you are not mealy-inouthed about xeceiving a commoner into your pedigree, is a mark of good sense, but even if nobility had been a necessary ingredient in your sistei's requisites for a husband, we should not have quarrelied on that account I have worked out twenty years in the trammels of office, and the king, as a reward of me long labours, has granted me a patent of nobility This high-ininded gentleman read me credentials over with extreme satisfaction, and returning them, told me that Doiothea was mme And Seraphina yours, exclaimed I

Thus were the two marriages agreed on between

us The consent of the intended brides was all that remained, for we neither of us presumed to controul the inclinations of our wards My friend therefore carried home me proposal to his sister, and I called Scipio, Beatrice, and me god-daughter together, for the purpose of laying open a similar project Beatrice voted loudly for immediate acceptance, and Seiaphina silently The father did not say much against it, but boggled a little at the fortune he must give to a gentleman, whose seat required such immediate and extensive repairs I stopped Scipio's mouth by telling him, that was me concern, and that I should contribute four thousand pistoles to the architect's estimate

In the evening, don Juan came agam Your busness is going swimmmgly, said I, pray heaven mme may proimise as fairly Better it cannot, answered he me influence was quite unnecessary to prevail with Dorothea your person had made its iinpiession, and your manners pleased her You were afraid she might not like you, while she, with more reason, having nothing to offer but her heart and hand What would she offer more? interrupted I, out of me wits with joy Since the lovely Dorothea can think of me without repugnance, I ask no more me fortune is ample, and the possession of her is the only dowry I should value

Don Juan and myself, highly delighted at having brought our views to bear so soon, were for hasten-

ing our nuptials, and cutting off all superfluous ceiemomes I closeted the gentleman with Sera-phina's parents, the settlements were soon agreed on, and he took his leave, promising to return next day with Dorothea My eager desire of appearing agreeable in that lady's eyes, occasioned me to spend three hours at least in adjusting me dress, and communcating the air of a lover to me person, but I could not do it so much to me mind as in me younger days The preparations for courtship are a pleasure to a young man, but a serious busness and hazardous speculation to one who is beginning to be oldish And yet it turned out better than me hopes or deserts , for don Juan's sister received me so graciously, as to put me in good humour with myself I was charmed with the turn of her mind, and foreboded that with discreet management and much deference, I might really get her to like me as well as any body else Full of this sweet hope, I sent for the lawyers, to draw up the two contracts, and for the clergyman of Paterna, to bung us better acquainted with our mistresses

Thus did I light the torch of Hymen for the second time, and it did not burn blue with the brimstone of repentance Dorothea, like a vntuous wife, made a pleasure of her duty in gratitude for the pams I took to anticipate all her wishes, she soon loved me as well as if I had been younger Don Juan and me god-daughter were more enthusiastic

in their mutual ardour, and what was most unprecedented of all, the two sisters-in-law loved one another sincerely. Don Juan was a man, in whom all good qualities met me esteem for him increased daily, and he did not repay it with ingratitude. In short, we were a happy and united family: we could scarcely bear the interval of separation between evening and morning. Our time was divided between Linas and Jutella. his excellency's pistoles made the old battlements to raise their heads agam, and the castle to resume its lordly port.

For these three years, reader, I have led a life of unixed bliss in this beloved society. To perfect me satisfaction, heaven has deigned to send me two sinihng babes, whose education will be the amusement of me declining years, and if ever husband might venture to hazard so bold an hypothesis, I devoutly believe myself their father.

THE END









